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RATIONALISM AND ORTHODOXY OF TO-DAY

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RATIONALISM & ORTHODOXY OF TO-DAY

AN ESSAY IN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

BY

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Carissimis meis

G. et J.

What we need is a Christian philosophy . . . a philosophy thought out afresh to-day in the light of modern knowledge.

BISHOP GORE.

Our loss of real civilisation is due to our lack of any theory of the universe. Only as we again succeed in attaining a strong and worthy theory of the universe shall we again become capable of producing a new civilisation.

Our present entire lack of any theory of the universe is the ultimate source of all the catastrophes and misery of our times.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER.

INTRODUCTION

SYNOPSIS OF THE ARGUMENT

THIS essay is an attempt to exhibit Christianity, not as a system which needs defence, but as the basis of the most satisfactory philosophy of the universe, when interpreted in the terms of the ancient Logos doctrine. The prologue of the Fourth Gospel — the conception of the Word as the life of the world and the light of men — is the true metaphysic of the scientific theory of evolution. The doctrine of the Word Incarnate supplies the theological foundation underlying the whole religious experience of mankind.

For philosophy and theology are at bottom one in their aim. Each alike, in different ways, attempts to ascertain the nature of ultimate Reality. Philosophy proceeds by the method of abstract thought. Theology is the interpretation of religious experience. But that experience is in various degrees the reaction of the human mind to that same Reality.

Such is the thesis we attempt to establish. The central thought is that religion, in its various forms, can best be explained in biological lan-

guage, as a biological fact. It will thus be an instance, at the highest limit of animal life, of the reaction of an organism to its environment. This belief can be held whatever particular view of its origin we are inclined to adopt.

At the same time it does not burden us with the assumption of a specific "religious instinct," while it preserves the idea which that somewhat questionable phrase is intended to express. It has also the great advantage of preserving the principle of continuity, which is the philosophical ground of evolution.

The view advocated is monistic throughout. It refuses to regard as ultimate the distinction between "matter," "life," and "mind." In regard especially to the two latter terms, we agree heartily with Professor Lloyd Morgan's doctrine, as advocated in *Life, Mind, and Spirit*, of "unrestricted concomitance." The only difference, if difference it be, is that we regard the general concept of life as including mind from the earliest stages onwards, however difficult it may be to conceive of the mind of an amœba. Thus psychology will be a department of the more general science of biology. There is complete continuity between the reaction under stimulus of the protozoon, and the spiritual experience of the Christian saint. The only distinction is that the Reality to which the reaction is made is immeasurably wider and richer in the latter case than in the former. But it is so only from the subjective standpoint of the organism

affected. Objectively it is one and the same all-embracing Reality throughout.

Now theology is a product of late reflection. It is, in every phase, an attempt by man to interpret, as we have said, his religious experience. In other words, its subject-matter is ultimate Reality. Thus, along such different paths, philosophy and theology converge to the same point. Our contention is (*a*) that the Christian religion is the most adequate form of religious experience; and (*b*) that accordingly, the Christian theology is the nearest approach which we can make to the nature of Reality; in other words the most satisfactory philosophy of the universe.

We not only admit, but make it a central part of our argument, that the knowledge of Reality thus gained is symbolic. But our point is that this symbolic presentment is less inadequate than any other. As long as we sojourn in this space-time universe we think and speak necessarily by means of symbols. But that which is, as symbol or picture, of its very nature inadequate, is not, on that account, necessarily untrue. Symbols may reflect as well as distort that which they represent. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, we maintain, is a reflection and not a distortion of that supreme Reality which transcends by including, and is at the same time immanent in, all the processes of the universe.

It is of course true that Christian theology was not in the first place, and by its primary intention,

a philosophical system, but an attempt to give intellectual form to Christian experience. But this very fact makes its contribution to philosophy all the more impressive.

This experience did not arise *in vacuo*. It was, and is, closely tied to certain alleged historical facts. This constitutes at once the weakness and the strength of the Christian position. On this aspect of the matter we have dwelt at some length, and have tried to give a sketch of the course of that extraordinary spiritual experience which underlies the records of the Old and New Testaments.

A considerable part of the earlier chapters is occupied by a discussion of Mr Julian Huxley's *Essays of a Biologist*. This is, if we may say so, a most important contribution to thought. In particular, we should be most grateful to the author for his demonstration (*a*) that on the whole the evolutionary process has been in the direction of progress; (*b*) that this progress has been towards the realisation of human values; while at the same time (*c*) there is no necessary and inherent " law of progress " discoverable in the universe.

Where, in our judgment, he fails is (*a*) in his attribution of progress below the human level to chance or necessity, whatever these words may mean; and (*b*) in his theology. The latter is most interesting and instructive, both in what he asserts and in what he denies. For him, God stands for the sum total of the forces operating

in the universe, as organised into a unitary whole by and in the human mind. To our thinking this is, and will be, increasingly recognised as the only tolerable alternative for the modern mind to the Christian view of God. The latter he rejects as belonging to an obsolete, pre-scientific mode of thought. But he has fallen into an error not unshared with him by many believers. He identifies the doctrine of the personality of God with the conception of Him as a magnified human individual. No small portion of the following pages is occupied with the refutation of this idea, and on the positive side, with the attempt to exhibit the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as a truly rational account of the nature of the ultimate Reality.

It is quite impossible to acknowledge in full one's indebtedness to those who have handled these high themes. But I would like to express especially gratitude to Mr J. Huxley, in regard to the work referred to above; to the Bishop of Gloucester's *Jesus Christ in Faith and History*; to Bishop Chandler's *Scala Mundi*; and Professor Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*.

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RATIONALISM AND ORTHODOXY OF TO-DAY

CHAPTER I

MIND AND THE UNIVERSE

It is a mistake to regard Christian theology as always on the defensive. Certainly it has had constantly to meet attacks, from the Gnosticism of the first century to the psychology (the anti-Christian variety) of the twentieth. But to defend a position is to exclude an enemy. And, rightly understood, the religion of the Incarnation, on its intellectual side, is the most inclusive philosophy of the universe known to man. Hence, its proper method of defence, if defence it can be called, is to show that it finds room for, and illuminates, the truths which are valued by its opponents. It has to learn from them, and then, first to discover, and then impart the discovery, what fresh light the new learning throws upon the truth which it has always indeed possessed, but which is capable of receiving, from age to age, a new illumination. There is a world of wisdom in the words of St Paul, that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Thus the true method of defence in the case of Christian theology is absorption. And the justification of this lies in its central conception of the Eternal Word as at once the rational principle of the universe, and the source of reason in man; in other words as being, in St John's language, both Life and Light. It is this conception which illuminates the great secret of all, which is the correspondence between the universe and the human mind. The fact that the mind can be viewed as a product of the natural process, and therefore as understanding it in part, by virtue of this kinship, is not in itself an all-sufficient explanation, but only takes the mystery one step backwards. To say that the universe is orderly, and that mind is one of its resultants, and as such must be capable of appreciating order, is not to explain the presence of order, but only to say again that, order being given, the universe will be intelligible. But if the universe itself is the manifestation, in time and space, of a spiritual personality which most truly reveals its (or his) true character in human personality, the mystery of existence lies open before us. The Logos doctrine is seen to be the true philosophy of science.

Certainly this idea that the universe is the expression of a rational principle is not peculiar to Christianity, or to Alexandrian Judaism. It was the discovery of Greek philosophy, and can be traced back as far as Heraklitus the Ephesian, *c.* 600 B.C. But that which is distinctive of the

prologue to the Fourth Gospel, and to the later writers who expounded this teaching, is the identification of this rational principle in nature, including human nature, with an historical person, Jesus of Nazareth.

Here is at any rate a consistent account of the world process as an evolution. From this point of view the universe is viewed in all its varied stages, inorganic and organic alike, as instinct with life and mind. It is an unfolding of a will and purpose, immanent in each stage, as well as transcendent; at each stage more clearly expressing its true character, until at last the age-long process reaches its culmination and justification in the self-expression of the Eternal Word in human nature. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

This construction is incapable of scientific proof. So is every construction, including evolution itself. The claim of the Logos doctrine of the universe to our acceptance is in principle the same as that of any scientific theory, except that its scope is vastly more extensive, namely, that it gives an intelligible and coherent account of a large number of facts. But it goes still deeper, for it offers an explanation of the problem mentioned above, why we see the perceived facts of the universe as an orderly scheme, in other words, why science is possible at all. Obviously this problem falls outside the purview of natural science, which cannot investigate its own foundation without ceasing to be science. The question

would seem to be this: Does the Logos doctrine afford a more intelligible and more coherent account of the facts of the universe, including as one of these the possibility of science, that is, of a systematic scheme of knowledge? If we demand more of a world theory, namely, that it shall be capable of absolute demonstration, we shall be doomed to disappointment. The special characteristic of the Christian version of the Logos doctrine is that it is involved in the historical process and is not merely or only a philosophy. Here, in a sense, is a vulnerable point. For it thus lays itself open not only to philosophical, but also to historical criticism. But the gain greatly outweighs the disadvantage, if disadvantage it be. For thereby it ceases to be a purely intellectual construction, an *a priori* hypothesis, as it were in the air. It has its roots in the common life of man. And further, if, as is almost universally admitted, the life of Jesus of Nazareth is the exhibition of human values in the highest form we know, then the enormously important result follows that, in a rudimentary form, we may be able to trace some adumbrations of these values in the non-human universe. In all this an element of faith admittedly enters. But it yet remains to be shown that faith is an irrational element in human nature. No one, least of all a man of science, is prepared to assert this. Some no doubt look forward to the time when all the facts of the universe shall be shown to be capable of expression in mathematical form.

But even when this is done, assuming that it can be done, the result will fall far short of the whole truth of the universe. It will be doubtless a most useful, but also a highly abstract, conceptual scheme. For obviously it will annul all the differences which make our universe what it is, and will negate the infinite variety of existence in favour of a single aspect, that is, capacity for measurement. And not even thus, if I rightly conceive of the theory of relativity, will the taint of the subjective be entirely removed. And again, from a quite different point of view, psychology has been for a long time teaching us that we cannot isolate the intellectual factor, even in the most disinterested lover of the truth, and that the pure reason is itself an abstraction, in other words, non-existent.

It remains that the Christian Logos doctrine will always be, to use the expression of William James, a "live option," that is, a case in which it is not unreasonable to make the venture of faith. We can do this without stultifying ourselves. Sooner or later, in one direction or another, the plunge must be and is in fact made. Every wide generalisation is an act of faith. Such an act has a rational ground, else it is not faith but superstition. But the act itself is one in which the whole nature of the person making it is involved. In other words it is an act of will, and we have now learnt that the will is not a special faculty of our being, but that being as a whole, in intellectual or some other activity.

Thus it is true to say that if we are to believe, we must will to believe, whether the subject-matter of our belief be a Christian or an anti-Christian view of the world. Even in matters of detailed observation or experiment, it is notoriously difficult to eliminate the personal factor. And when a wide, still more a universal view is involved, no man is ever influenced, whatever he may think, by purely rational considerations. For, as we said, reason in the pure state is not to be found in the real world.

The immediate occasion of these remarks is a recent reading of *Essays of a Biologist* by Julian Huxley. There can hardly be a more interesting subject than the relation of biology to a wide world-view, and it is difficult to imagine that it could be treated in a more interesting manner than it is in this book. We owe a great debt to the author. In many points his view harmonises admirably with the Logos doctrine. But from his theological reconstruction and from his criticism of Christian theology, one finds grave reason to dissent. And it seems well worth while to set out in order these points of agreement and disagreement.

1. The main and most interesting subject of the *Essays* is the bearing of modern biology on the conception of progress. Not the least of the obligations under which Mr Huxley has placed us is the clear light he has thrown on this subject. It is a very great gain to have our ideas

so clarified. The following are the most important points in his treatment of it.

(*a*) The fact that some simple forms of life, *e.g.* Lingula, have remained unaltered from an incredibly remote period, and that other forms have degenerated, constitutes no argument against the existence of a progressive tendency in evolution. These facts prove that progress is not universal, but not that no such thing exists in nature as a whole.

(*b*) Nor can we attach importance to the objection that increase in complexity (here we are irresistibly reminded of the Spencerian definition) is not itself progress. We may add that increase in size is not necessarily progress either. For a mere aggregation of undifferentiated cells cannot be said to have any advantage in the sense of being higher in the scale of being than such cells existing separately. But it is a sound argument that the negative method is the wrong road. The only safe way is to ask whether we can discover any positive signs of advance, and then, whether these instances are numerous enough, and sufficiently widespread, to enable us to assert that advance is a feature of the whole.

(*c*) There is such positive evidence to be found of advance on the widest scale, in the improvement of the mechanism of life, as we pass up the evolutionary scale. This improvement is

seen in the two most impressive facts of (1) the differentiation of cells in the metazoa on the principle of division of labour. No longer does the single cell have to perform all the functions of the living creature, digestion, reproduction, and the rest; but groups of cells are differentiated into the various organs with their specific functions; and (2) the elaboration of the nervous system, with the establishment of centres, finally of one centre, of directive control.

(*d*) Closely allied to this is the gradual development of mind. There has been (1) the acquisition of associative memory, or the power of learning by experience; and (2) in man, the power of grasping general principles, enabling him both to interpret experience and plan intelligently for the future; and (3) the formation of social tradition, garnering the lessons of past experience, and turning them to effective account.

Here are indeed features of transcendent importance, for to these are due both the development and maintenance of the higher animal forms, and also everything which constitutes humanity as we know it. We shall shortly return to the subject, but just at present we will complete Mr Julian Huxley's argument that biology proves that progress is an actual fact.

(*e*) Owing to the double factors of the increase of mental power in the organism, and the intercommunication of minds, due to the influence of social tradition, "the psychical faculties of knowing, feeling, and willing, have increased in intensity, and also in their relative importance for the life of the individual organism."

(*f*) And now we can surely, and, I believe, with Mr Huxley's concurrence, add that the appearance of moral values in human life, the distinction between moral good and evil, the idea of "right for right's sake," all, in a word, that we mean by conscience, marks the culmination of the whole evolutionary process, apart from the development of religion with which we deal later.

Here we come to a most important point. It makes no difference whether we speak of conscience or the moral sense as a "faculty," or regard it as a mode of feeling leading to behaviour which involves the entire personality. Professor McDougall, who, in his *Introduction to Social Psychology*, strongly objects to Dr Rashdall's assertion of a distinct moral sense or consciousness, maintains, nevertheless, in his *Outline of Psychology*, that "conscience is identical with the whole moral personality, with moral character," which is "a very complex mental structure, slowly built up in the individual under the influence of the moral tradition. . . . This moral

tradition, which has been slowly built up during the course of not less than ten thousand years, by the efforts and self-sacrifice of the best men of all times, is the most precious possession of mankind." It all comes to this, that conscience is not a simple, unanalysable thing, "not merely the capacity of pronouncing moral judgments, but the whole body of instincts, feelings, emotions, desires, which are presupposed by and which influence these judgments, as well as those which prompt to the doings of the actions which they prescribe" (Rashdall). The fact remains that we have at one end of the scale the amœba, or rather some yet simpler form of life, and at the other a moral personality. Surely we need to look no further for a proof that evolution has meant, on the whole and in its main tendency, progress. Further, we must bear in mind that the possibility of constructing a natural history of conscience, that is, of showing that the moral sense has developed out of simple and crude elements, of tracing it to "taboo," and following out "taboo" down to the herd-instinct, does not destroy its authority. Nor are we impugning thereby, if the argument should lead us so far, its divine origin. To construct a real or imaginary picture of how a thing grew up, is not to explain the thing itself. If each human being has developed from the union of two microscopic cells, this fact has no bearing on the value and significance of human life. We can carry the argument into the enemy's camp. Any process

must be judged not by its beginnings but by its end. And this end alone gives us the clue to the interpretation of the process as a whole. This is a principle of first-rate importance, and of very wide application.

We now return to a point which we left over for further discussion, namely, the appearance of the psychical factor in evolution. Is this an altogether new and unaccountable thing, introduced as it were from outside? Is there really an unbridgeable gap between matter and mind? The "New Psychology" is made to rest on the instinctive basis of human life. But what, exactly, is instinct? And is there, once more, a gap between "instinct" and "intelligence?" Here are indeed hard questions, and I suppose philosophers will discuss them to the end of time. But it may be some little help if we consider that all such problems ultimately merge into a wider and deeper one, the nature of life itself. Mind is not a mere attribute of living things, it is life itself in its highest manifestation. As Bishop Chandler says, in *Scala Mundi*, "All life is purposive, and contains the germ of the most advanced developments of mind. It seems futile to say that at no point of evolution can we detect the emergence of mind, and that therefore there is no such thing. A mental or purposive quality is present in all life. Thus the physical structure is soaked in mentality; it is just the instrument used by the life which indwells it, in order to avoid collisions, obtain nourishment,

and so forth. At a later period, coincident with the further development of the brain structure, the organic life itself becomes more complex and manifests itself in those cognitive, conative, and affective aspects, which we know as reason, will, and desire, but which are simply aspects of the organic life at an advanced stage, and to which we tend to ascribe too much of separateness from each other. And by this time the nervous system, on its side, has become a highly elaborate, minutely differentiated structure, sufficiently delicate to express these new manifestations of the indwelling life. Instead of a crudely dualistic conception of a purely immaterial mind, interacting somehow or other with a purely material body, we have the concrete conception of a single living organism, in which whole and parts are mutually dependent on each other. The life is the whole, which directs and gives purpose to the parts, while the parts, in their turn, build up and support the whole."

This is a long quotation, but I believe it is the most valuable contribution which has ever been made to this particular problem. The nature of life may or may not be a question always, as at present, insoluble by our intelligence, which is itself a product of the process described. But it is a clear gain to have one problem instead of two or three.

For this line of thought enables us to deal not only with the antithesis of mind and matter, but also with that of instinct and intelligence. Both lie within the psychical aspect of life, both are

correlated with the physical structure. As has been so often pointed out, the difficulties are greatly increased by the ambiguous use of the word "instinct." For example, we speak of the instinct of fear, of anger, and the like. These words, however, stand for emotions which accompany, or are presumed to accompany, certain kinds of behaviour which we call instinctive. Again, it is exceedingly difficult to avoid thinking of "instinct" as a "faculty," opposed to intelligence, or (which it certainly is not) as intelligence of a low type, out of which the human mind has developed. It would conduce to clarity of thought if we could keep the word instinct as a label for certain very remarkable types of behaviour, without prejudging the question whether in all cases these have psychical correlations. One is inclined to think that they have, but this is a matter of opinion. What we do find is this: animals, sometimes of the lowest grade of organisation, performing most elaborate trains of action which are clearly purposive, and which have not been learnt by experience. We may select one instance out of innumerable instances, the oft-quoted Yucca Moth. This emerges from the chrysalis just when the Yucca flowers open, each for a single night. From the anthers of one the moth collects pollen and kneads it into a little pellet; she then flies to another flower, pierces the pistil of this with her ovipositor, lays her eggs among the ovules, then stuffs the mass of pollen into the opening

of the stigma, thus securing that the ovules shall develop, and so supply food to the grubs (cp. McDougall, *Outline of Psychology*, pp. 74 *sqq.*). The animal world presents hosts of examples at least as elaborate as this, and some performed by creatures of a lower type than the moth. Instinctive action always takes place as a response to a stimulus. The interesting point about it is, that the action is often so fixed that it cannot be varied to meet obstacles artificially created. It is incapable of being modified by intelligent adaptation to a new situation. But this is not by any means always the case, and we sometimes observe such modification, and improvement by practice. Here is the entry of intelligence coming to the aid of instinct, both to meet novel cases, and to apply the lessons of the past to the present. It is scarcely necessary to add that the old idea that animals exhibit instinct and human beings intelligence, or reason, is completely exploded. But, in the case of the latter, with very few exceptions, it is impossible to find examples of purely instinctive behaviour.

It would be wrong to derive intelligence from instinct. But the appearance of intelligence, quite low down in the animal scale, certainly constitutes progress. It marks a step in the onward march of life. If life is essentially response to environment, then intelligent response is a further unfolding of the potentialities of life, a fuller disclosing of what life is or has in it to become, as compared with instinctive response.

Mr Julian Huxley has fully established the fact of biological progress on the whole. But we know nothing of any law of progress, if we take law to mean anything else than its strictly scientific meaning of a generalised statement of observed facts. There is no inherent tendency, as far as science knows, towards progress. The identification of evolution and progress is only a popular superstition. The course of development might have been quite different from that which it has actually taken. Evolution is not a force which makes things happen one way or another. It is an hypothesis which holds together, and in this sense only "explains," a vast number of facts of observation, but does not profess to tell us why these facts are what they are.

When we speak of progress we mean, of course, progress relative to our human standards. We judge that increasing control of environment, growth of mental power, moralisation of human life, are in themselves good. The most significant fact in the world process is that its general direction has been towards the realisation of our ideas of value. To say that this must necessarily be the case, because we ourselves are products of this process, does not explain the fact any more than the same consideration explains why the universe is rational. What does emerge from these two facts, of the rationality of the universe, and that such part of its process as we can observe has been in the direction of human values, is that the cosmos is a unity, of which we ourselves

are a part, which is penetrated through and through with rationality, both in the sense of order and in that higher sense in which we identify rationality with value, that which we judge not merely orderly, but good.

But the kinship of man with the universe does not explain why the universe is rational or corresponds to his ideas of value. The phrase used above, "product of a process," is a very convenient one, but may lend itself to serious misunderstanding. For a process is just a process and cannot produce anything, nor does it contain its own explanation in itself. We do not account for anything in human nature by calling man (as Mr Huxley is indeed careful not to do) a "product of the cosmic process."

That man is "organic to nature" is a great and valuable truth. It is illustrated afresh in the essays before us. And no one can read Professor Pringle-Pattison's *Idea of God* without having this truth deeply impressed upon his mind. But we have not, by saying this, got rid of the fact that man can in a true sense stand apart from the cosmos to which he belongs and pass intellectual and moral judgments upon it. Nor is the significance of this diminished by saying that "nature comes to self-consciousness in man." Man is quite certainly a part of nature, but more than a part, because he can in thought separate himself from it. A member of a series, who is that and nothing more, cannot contemplate that series as a whole.

And if nature be such a series, an orderly progress, as we believe, how can a series be self-conscious in one of its members?

The idea with which we are concerned at present is that when we say that biological progress is proved, we are really saying that the general direction of nature has been towards those ends which answer to our human values. This idea is the very keystone of the arch of Mr Julian Huxley's theological construction. And so it will be worth while to quote some of the beautiful and striking things which he has said about it. "The origin of life itself, and its movement in time, both these are found to face in the same direction as ourselves. St Paul wrote that all things work together for good." (He did not; but wrote: "All things work together for good to them that love God.") "That is an exaggeration: but they work together so that the average level of the good is raised, the potentialities of life are bettered. . . . The problems of evil, of pain, of strife, of death and all insufficiency and imperfection—all these and a host of others remain to perplex and burden us. But the fact of progress emerging from pain and battle and imperfection—this is an intellectual proof which can support the distressed and questioning mind, and be incorporated into the common theology of the future."

My object in writing this is to show that all which Mr Julian Huxley has so well said, finds its place and its satisfying explanation in the

theology of St John; that what we need is not a "theology of the future," but a better understanding of the old.

Science describes: it is the business of philosophy and theology, if they can, to explain. Description tells us how things happen; explanation would tell us why they happen.

We turn now, therefore, to consider whether, in this essay on progress, we have anything which is philosophical, in addition to the science of which the writer is a master; whether, in other words, he does offer an explanation of the fact of progress, as well as a proof of the existence of the fact; and further, if he does, whether we can consider his explanation satisfactory.

In regard to the second or human stage he notes the fact that "the rise of consciousness to become a factor of importance in evolution has been one of the most notable single items of progress." No one can deny that here we have purposive action, a progress which is teleological, directed towards ends. But in regard to the first and immeasurably longer stage, which laid the foundation for man and all his works, if we follow Mr Julian Huxley, we seem to be committed to what appears the paradoxical view that ends have been achieved without purposive action, which are yet, as we have seen, correspondent to human values. "Darwin gave the blow to teleology by showing that apparently purposive structures could arise by means of a non-purposive mechanism." We only note

here that Darwin admitted, or rather asserted, that his theory left room for a wider teleology, and consider what is the nature of this mechanism which is held to do away with purpose in respect of biological progress. As this is the crux of the position, and the point where we join issue with the author of this essay, it will be well once more to quote his words.

"Thus from the well-established biological premises of (1) the tendency to geometrical increase with consequent struggle for existence; (2) some form of inherited variability, we can deduce as necessary consequence, not only the familiar but none the less fundamental fact of Natural Selection, but also the almost neglected fact, that a *certain fraction* of the guiding force of Natural Selection will inevitably be pushing organisms into changes which are progressive. . . . Progress, like adaptation, in pre-human evolution is almost entirely the resultant of blind chance and blind necessity."

The following observations suggest themselves:

(1) The present writer acknowledges incompetence to deal with the controversy among biologists themselves as to how far natural selection has been the predominating factor in evolution. The idea of minute discontinuous variations leads us to what appears an insuperable difficulty; how can we account for minute variations being preserved before they reached survival value, and accumulated until they did attain to a variation possessing such value? This is

in part but not wholly answered, if we adopt, as our author does, the theory of mutations, or larger variations occurring suddenly at certain points.

He holds that the more probable view is that the material on which natural selection acted was a number of small mutations. We remark, in passing, that the rise of these is not accounted for. If we assume that they are due to minute changes in the microscopical, or ultra-microscopical, constituents of the cell, the difficulty is not solved, but only pushed further back.

(2) Natural selection only means that organisms which are fitted to their environment will survive, and those unfitted will die out. Those which survive are quite clearly, as our author indeed points out, not necessarily higher or more progressive forms, but those suited to their environment, whatever that may be. If another and severer glacial epoch set in, our place, and the places of all animal and vegetable organisms which are associated with us, would be taken by mosses, lichens, and other simple forms of life. These would, in the altered environment, be the fittest, and would accordingly survive. Here we should have an instance of non-progressive evolution. So it seems that, if we would explain the fact of progress, we have to account for two things, not one alone; for the occurrence of mutations in the direction of progress, and for a coincident environment in regard to which they were the fittest.

(3) We can see what the writer means by "the guiding force of natural selection," from the context. But we may perhaps regard the expression as a somewhat ambiguous one. Natural selection is but a generalised statement of what happens on a wide scale in nature. Like all scientific laws, it sums up a large mass of observations in a convenient form. But a general statement is not a force, nor can it guide anything in any direction. It is almost too obvious a remark that natural selection explains neither the origin of favourable variations nor the environment in which they flourish.

(4) But our more serious quarrel with the author is in regard to his ascription of biological progress to "blind chance and blind necessity." We cannot help feeling that here he has deserted his science for philosophy, and that of no high order. What has science, or, for that matter, philosophy, to do with chance? Chance is surely another name for the confession of our ignorance. In an orderly universe, and if the universe be not orderly there is an end to scientific or any other attempt at an intellectual construction of it, there is no such thing as chance. And what, again, are we to make of necessity as a cause of infra-human progress? We have been told that that progress is a simple positive fact: that there is no such thing as an inevitable, necessary law of progress. But here we are suddenly landed in a cloudy region of more than questionable philo-

sophy. The statement we are criticising seems to mean not simply that progress is an observed fact, but a fact of such a nature that it could not have been otherwise. The course of natural happenings, then, will have been predetermined from the start. There is a parallel, which has been noticed before, between a mechanistic science and a Calvinistic theology. But our writer, so far as we can judge, is far from denying freedom. If we grasp his general position rightly, he is as little a thorough-going mechanist as he is a Calvinist. We think—at least we hope—he will agree with us that the more we banish such ideas as "necessity," the better it will be for our clear view of the actual universe. Facts we know, and a good many better than before, thanks to this very volume of Essays, and we can grope patiently for some kind of explanation of them. But "chance" and "necessity" are not explanations but the negation of any explanation.

(5) There is, of course, a true sense in which we can speak of the mechanism of evolution, or of the human mind. And our author claims that, in the passage quoted, we have the true view of the mechanism of evolution. What is exactly connoted by this term? We cannot find in it anything more than is covered by the word "order." Discarding any philosophical or pseudo-philosophical idea of an iron-bound necessity, when we talk of the mechanism of nature, we only imply that natural facts occur in an orderly

manner, that things happen as we should expect. On this point I would like to express my obligations to Professor Brooke's *Foundations of Zoology*, where it is put very clearly. Our minds tend to get obsessed with the idea of mechanical necessity, and to forget that if this phrase has any meaning, it only means that events happen as we should expect them to happen. The result follows, that mechanism explains nothing, but itself is in need of explanation. And to explain mechanism would be to find an answer to the question: Why is nature orderly? Why do events occur in accordance with expectation?

I think we may sum up the total effect of these criticisms by saying that the explanation is no explanation at all. It ignores in part the concurrence of favourable variations and favourable environment, and its philosophy of "chance" and "necessity" is unfortunate. I inserted the qualification "in part" advisedly, because of the writer's attractive idea of empty biological "niches" waiting for organisms to occupy. But this suggestion does not nearly cover the whole ground. The main question still remains: How can a process working blindly and aimlessly issue in ends of human value?

I venture to think that the writer is dominated by a too narrow conception of "purpose." He says: "'Purpose' is a term invented to denote a particular operation of the human mind, and should only be used when a psychological basis may reasonably be postulated." What this seems

to mean is that there is no evidence of purpose visible in the cosmos, except of human purpose.

Before we tackle the main problem, we may ask whether we have any means of knowing this to be true, even in the narrow and restricted sense, and even assuming that such a "psychological basis" is not to be found in the higher organisms? If adaptation is of the essence of an organism, is it certain that this has no psychological correlate? I do not think Mr Julian Huxley would commit himself to the assertion that absence of a brain necessarily implies the absence of a mind. He says himself that "since all material developments in evolution can be traced back step by step, and shown to be specialisations of one or more primitive properties of living matter, it is not only an economy of hypothesis, but also, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the proper conclusion, that mental properties also are to be traced back to the simplest and most original forms of life." It is rather difficult, if not impossible, to understand what a potentiality of mind which is not mental can mean. The other alternative is to assume that mental properties were, so to speak, injected from the outside. Theologically, this would lead to an extreme transcendentalism, *i.e.* God would be separated from the world process in much the same sense that a watchmaker is separated from the watch which has left his hands.

But if we admit the existence of mind, in however lowly a sense, then from this point of view

also chance and necessity are eliminated, and we must bring in once more the concept of purpose. For where there is mind there must also be conation, a striving towards an end. Certainly, in the lowest stages, we cannot think of the end as an idea consciously entertained. But either there is no mind in the lowly organisms of which we are thinking, or else we must attribute to them some elementary kind of awareness, feeling, conation. For apart from these rudimentary mental processes it is absurd to speak of mind at all. And conation is the first stage of what appears as purpose in the fully developed mind. If then we take purpose in this latter sense, we agree with our author—for his "psychological basis" will include a reasoned conception of the end. But the alternative is not between purpose and its complete absence, but between the earlier and later stages of the same process, which at every stage exhibits something of the purposive activity of mind.

We leave to the biologists the determination of the controversy between neo-Lamarckians and neo-Darwinians. For this is complicated by questions which belong entirely to their own province. But for the reasons just given we reject the idea of a mere haphazard collection of variations, sifted out by chance hazards of environment. Such a process, if it can be dignified by that name, could not by any possibility yield us the universe which we know, and which Mr Julian Huxley presents to us as on the whole friendly to man, and as his ally in his higher aspirations.

He criticises Bergson's idea of the *élan vital*, and compares his view with holding that the movement of a train is caused by an *élan locomotif* of the engine. But he admits that there is an urge of life: "And it is, as a matter of fact, urging life up the steps of progress."

His own explanation we have just dealt with at some length. The difficulty is that of understanding how a process so blind and mechanical should present an appearance capable of being described both by Bergson and himself in what is, after all, much the same way. But we may agree that the mere assertion of an *élan vital* is not itself an explanation of the universe. But it does describe an aspect of the total picture, to which indeed our author has done justice. But still less than the *élan vital* does the action of a blind environment or chance variations or mutations furnish an explanation of that aspect.

What we do see is the impressive picture of the emergence and development of life. All life is purposive, which comes to the same thing, as we saw above, as saying that life and mind are inseparable. The growth of mentality is not the mere effect of the development of a more and more complex nervous structure. That growth is an aspect or side of a single process. The work of biology is to describe the varied mechanisms of the process. But even supposing that some day its work should be completed, the description of a mechanism is not an explanation of its origin, or of the power which works through it and keeps

it going, and whose purpose it subserves. The biologist may well reply that he is only concerned with the phenomena which we agree in calling vital, that no science may rightly be called upon to give an account of its own first principles, that nothing is gained by speaking of the *élan vital*. All this, however, does not compel us to stop at this point but rather impels us to go further afield.

We need a philosophy which does more complete justice to the facts than do the ideas of chance, mechanism or necessity. As we have seen, the first is only another name for ignorance, the second explains nothing, the third contradicts the whole mental atmosphere in which natural science has its being. From one point of view, the facts which are to be explained are bewildering in their number and complexity; but from another, they can be very simply stated in broad and bold outline, and towards such a statement Mr Julian Huxley's masterly exposition gives material help.

We have, then, in the universe as we know it:

(1) The overwhelming impression of order and rationality.

(2) The majestic progress of life, advancing in ever more complete control of its environment, in one word, mentality.

(3) In certain organisms, *i.e.* in men, a conscious appreciation of values, of goodness, truth, and beauty.

(4) Looking backwards, from this attained human standpoint, we can see that on the whole the entire movement has been in the direction of these values.

A philosophy which can offer a rational explanation of these facts, which together make up our idea of the universe, must above all do justice to its unity.

I think that so far we have Mr Huxley on our side. But the unity of the cosmos cannot lightly be passed over. Apart from this, we could neither speak or think of a cosmos at all. And it is a unity of the most complete and impressive kind, for it includes the greatest conceivable amount of differences. Judged by this standard, it is perfectly obvious that the unity of an organism is a far more real unity than that of a mass of relatively homogeneous, inorganic material, as a stone or a rock. How unspeakably more real, again, is the unity of the cosmos itself. The only image of such a unity, however far it may fall short in comparison, is that of our own minds. I suggest that this is why, in some aspects, the cosmos has to us a friendly and familiar look; why we feel at home in our world. The microcosm realises its kinship, in essential structure, with the macrocosm.

Thus we are led back, after so long a wandering, to the Logos doctrine. For there all the innumerable diversities of the universe find their principle of unity in the One Mind. And the

fact of progress, and of progress in these particular directions, towards increasing mentality and realisation of values, has, I believe, its most satisfactory explanation if we regard the time-process as the gradual, progressive revelation of this One Mind, the making explicit of that which was implicit from the first. "In the beginning was the Word." And, if we regard man as being, so far, the highest expression or realisation (if we may use the term) of the Word, then we can understand why the universe can be made intelligible in the terms of human minds, and why man can recognise his own values in the process of the world. "The Life was the Light of men." And while this train of thought cannot prove it, it does make intelligible the idea of a real Incarnation, of a more complete self-manifestation of the Word Who is both Life and Light. "The Word became flesh, and tabernacled amongst us."

There seems at first sight something barren, cold, intellectual, in the description of the rich and varied progress of the universe as the unfolding of a Mind. But that is simply due to the incapacity of human language to do justice to the Divine. The idea of the Logos as mere thought is of course grotesquely inadequate. We need, however, to remember that mere thinking is not the sole function of mind, even in the most lowly forms of mentality with which we are acquainted. Still less can we so limit the Divine Mind. All our ideas of value, of the good,

the beautiful, the true, must be conceived of as being eternally and in perfection present in and to the Mind of the Creative Word as the Light of men. Indeed, some such view appears to be involved in our possession and recognition of such values. For, first, value implies of necessity some mind or minds in and for which it exists. And, secondly, the taint of relativity appears to attach to all realisation of these in human experience, and that in proportion to the education and refinement of that experience. It is the morally best men who most feel their shortcomings in regard to the ideal of goodness. The most earnest seekers after knowledge, in whatever field, are most conscious of vast and unexplored regions of truth. And the greatest artists are just those who are haunted by the vision of unattainable beauty. Such an invincible and universal impression points to the real existence of an absolute goodness, an absolute truth, an absolute beauty. And this real existence, again, leads us to the One Mind for which there are no ideals at all, but only the abiding and eternal existence of all goodness, truth, and beauty. Progressive evolution is the self-expression of this Mind in terms of the time-process, which is only another name for succession. The exact and precise relation of that which, as Absolute and Eternal, knows no succession, to the time-process, in which we are immersed, is for ever beyond our power of thought, still more beyond our power of expression. For it to be otherwise,

we should have to do what is obviously, in the nature of things, impossible; that is, think ourselves out of temporal and spatial experience into the experience which the Absolute has of itself. The idea of Creation is the best one we have to describe God realising Himself in terms of time and space:

> "Let there be light and there was light: 'tis so:
> For was and is, and will be, are but is;
> And all creation is one act at once,
> The birth of light: but we, that are not all,
> As parts, can see but parts, now this, now that,
> And live, perforce, from thought to thought, and make
> One act a phantom of succession: thus
> Our weakness somehow shapes the shadow, Time."

And here I would quote a fine passage in which Mr Huxley has given expression to this very idea: "There remains in some ways the hardest problem of all. The greatest experiences of human life, those in which the mind appears to touch the Absolute and the Infinite—what of their relation to this notion of progress? They are realised in many forms—in love, in intellectual discovery, in art, in religion; but the salient fact about all is that they are felt as of intensest value, and that they seem to leave no more to be desired." The sentence which immediately follows is this: "Doubtless when we say that at such moments we touch the Infinite or the Absolute we mean only that we touch what is infinite and absolute in comparison with our

ordinary selves." Far more satisfactory is it to say that we, as finite, as living in a time and space world which necessarily shapes all the categories of our thought, are unable to comprehend the Divine Mind; but, because that Mind expresses itself in the natural order, and, above all within that order, in our own minds, some measure of apprehension is within our reach. And to this apprehension belong not only our clear-cut thoughts but, even more truly, such obscure intimations, vague hintings and surmisings, of which the greatest poets have spoken, as they only could speak, but which are not alien, as the passage above shows us, from the mind of a man of science. There is no better test of philosophy than that it gives a far-reaching and inclusive explanation of the facts of which science is the description. This test is satisfied, in completest measure, by that ancient philosophy of the creative and immanent Word, which came to a new birth and life in the religion of the Incarnate Word.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

We propose now to examine more closely the alternative world-theory proposed by Mr Huxley, which assumes the garb of a theology. There are here two main topics of interest: (1) the account which he gives of the origin of religion, including the Christian religion; and (2) the new idea of God which he proposes as a substitute for the old. The very great interest of his discussion of this, the most important of all problems which can engage our attention, lies in his frank adoption of the view that the conception of God is the result of the "projection" of ideas of the human mind upon the universe.

1. The first stage in the growth of theological conceptions is the notion of "power, of mysterious influence, sometimes partly crystallised round a primitive deity. Later, however, the power became frankly anthropomorphic, and gods came into being, many or one. Man had projected the idea of that active agency he knew best—human personality—into his idea of cosmic powers."

In these few words a long process of human

development is summed up. We have little doubt that, in the main, the summary is accurate. In fact, we would be inclined to go a stage beyond Mr Huxley, and discard the "crystallisation round a primitive deity." For deity implies the notion of personality, and in the earliest stage of all, this notion had not been applied by man to himself, much less to the object of his worship.

Anthropologists have generally abandoned the theory of animism as affording an account of the origin of religion. There is little doubt, indeed, that primitive man regarded objects around him, which we should call inanimate, as possessed of a life like his own. But this, by itself, does not account for the origin of the specifically religious sentiment, which is something *sui generis*. Moreover, he could not attribute the possession of a "soul" (*anima*) to things in general, before he had some idea that he himself possessed a soul, without some conception, that is, of his own personality. And introspection comes relatively late in the history of thought. It was rather a vague notion of life, of the contrast, above all, between the living and the dead, which influenced his mind and moulded his early thoughts of himself and his world.

There seem to be two views, which perhaps are not in the long run inconsistent, as to the birth of religion.

(*a*) Certain, by no means all, of the natural

phenomena with which men found themselves surrounded, produced in their minds the sense of the uncanny, the awe-inspiring. Here we are, according to this theory, to see the first dim germ of the stirring of the religious emotion. In this connexion it is interesting to observe the connexion between Professor Marrett's theory of "animatism," which we have tried to summarise, and Professor Otto's *Idea of the Holy*, a connexion indeed which the latter has noticed.

(*b*) Then we have a second view, which we associate with the researches of Professor Eliot Smith and Mr W. J. Perry, that the origin of religion is to be sought in the search for the "life-giver," from the cowrie shell up to the later conception of the Great Mother. One point which specially strikes us is the great number of religious phenomena which seem to find here an explanation. One wonders, however, whether the whole thing can have its source in one local centre of origin, namely, Egypt.

The religious sentiment may have had, probably did have, more springs than one. The search for the giver of life does indeed explain many early rites and beliefs, but does it quite bring us into touch with the primal chord which vibrates through all religion, the sense of awe, distinct both from mere terror and from a deliberate search for any consciously conceived end?

It is just the touch of the unexpected, the uncanny, which seems to give what we require as

the first beginning of the long history of man's religion: not a theory, or pursuit of an object of desire, but a vague, unformed feeling.

This seems to be the place to record our adhesion to the view of Professor Marrett and other anthropologists as to the vexed question of the relation between magic and religion. Neither is the source of the other. Both sprang from a common root, which now it is the fashion to call a "magico-religious complex." But the two things are divergent growths. Both start with the "mysterious influence," the mana, which seems somehow to be the quality possessed by, or radiating from, certain objects (or persons). But two attitudes are possible. One, that of submission, of self-abasement: the other, that of controlling the influence or power to one's own advantage. The first gives us religion, the second, magic.

Here, so far, we can scarcely be said to have instances of "projection." Rather, we have a certain impression produced by the universe on human minds, to which they react in certain ways. On the alternative view, that of Professor Eliot Smith, if it be really an alternative, we have what may be termed an undeveloped form of projection, in a quasi-personification of certain natural objects. Yet "personification" is scarcely the right word. For they are merely invested with the imaginary power of satisfying a fundamental human desire, that of securing life. The projection lies in the attribute of power, which,

it may be said, can only be derived from man's experience of power exercised by himself. It might be possible, however, to argue that the process took the reverse direction, and that experience of the impact of natural forces awoke man to the consciousness of his own possession of real though limited power.

But the more one reflects on the theory which would find the origin of religion in the search for the life-giver, the stronger grows the impression that we are here on the track of a very early and widely diffused form of magic, which later combined with a more properly religious tendency of a different origin, as when the cowrie shell was displaced by the cult of the Great Mother. And this impression is due to two causes. First, there is evident the desire to impress nature into the fulfilment of human desire, which is the very hall-mark of magic. Secondly, there is the absence, until the entrance of the specifically religious movement, of the element of self-abasement—which is the differentiating mark of religion.

However this may be, we come upon a clearer instance of projection when we arrive at the point where the vaguely conceived numina are replaced by deities of human form and with human attributes. But what are we to say of the ancient cult of animal deities, sprung presumably from a previous totemistic stage? Even at the present day, we recognise the mystery which hangs around that vast world of life below us, not

wholly irrational, and in some ways transcending reason in its power of adaptation and uncanny knowledge of the natural world. Some fraction of these powers still seems the heritage of savage races, and man appears to have shed the last vestiges of them only at a relatively advanced stage of civilisation. And the various forms of animal cult, from totemism to deities of animal or half-animal and half-human forms, is due, I suggest, in part at least, to this very element of uncanniness, which is always liable to arouse the sentiment of religious awe. So here, again, we have not so much a case of projection, as the effect of a certain aspect of the universe on the human mind, so curiously receptive of this kind of impression.

The upshot of the discussion, so far, has been to show that the origin of religion can scarcely be found in the psychological theory of projection, and that, in the earliest stages of his religious growth, man can hardly be described as projecting himself into the universe and discovering his own likeness therein, but rather as reacting in a certain way to certain aspects of the universe. Is it too much to say that religion is an instance, in a higher sphere than the physical, of adaptation?

If this is true, religion will appear as a biological factor in the wider sense of the term. Not daring to intrude where biologists fear to enter, we abstain from attempting a definition of life. But at any rate, life is marked by a series of

reactions on the part of the organism to its environment. And religion takes its place as one of such reactions, when life has reached the appropriate level. For as organisms rise in the life-scale, so they find themselves in an ever-widening environment. This is as true of mental as it is of physical progress. We cannot, in fact, make too sharp a severance between the two. Organism and environment form a complete whole, and neither can be properly understood without reference to the other.

This consideration appears to yield what perhaps might be termed a biological justification of religion. Or rather, it sets religion above the sphere in which we can speak of justification. We should not dream of "justifying," or of "defending," the appearance of a new organ, or of increasing intellectual power. Whether we incline towards Darwin or Lamarck, we accept such things as they stand, as further revelations of the true character both of organism and environment. And thus there appears no contradiction between the biological view of religion and the view that bases religion on revelation, in the theological sense of that word. For a true Theism will not distinguish between God and nature, in the sense of opposing the one to the other. Nor, again, will it identify them so far as to make nature as a whole the equivalent of that which religion means by God. And if man be a religious animal, then the environment must contain, or rather must be of, such a spiritual

character as will explain such a reaction. The point here, we repeat, is that there is no contradiction between the biological and the theological views of the origin of religion. The former deals with religion as a fact in human life. Like all such facts it must be regarded as one more reaction to a stimulus exerted on the organism by its environment, when the organism has reached the stage at which it is capable of responding to that particular stimulus. In a similar way we account for the assumption by man of the upright position, for his larger brain, for his power of fashioning and using tools, for his acquirement of language, and finally, for the capacity for abstract thought. We cannot indeed separate body and soul, matter and mind. However unsuccessful we may be in our attempts to discover the connexion between these two related elements, we cannot rest content with an unreconciled dualism. As we have noticed before, the antithesis, if for convenience sake we may so call it, does not first arise in regard to organisms with a nervous system, but in all probability permeates the universe. Similarly, as we have just said, we cannot draw a clear line of separation between organism and environment. All the advance of the former is conditioned by, and is of the nature of a response to the latter. On the other hand, from the point of view of the organism, the environment is not a fixed, static whole. Each advance it makes by way of response opens out to it new realms, from which in turn new stimuli arise.

There is both growth in the organism, and correspondingly growth in the environment as it exists in relation to it. Hence we seek in the human environment for the stimulus to which that peculiar human product we name religion is the appropriate reaction. We have seen that there is great probability in the view that traces the first rude beginning of religion to man's sense of the awe-inspiring aspect of nature. But that is only saying that there is such an aspect, which we can only define in terms of its effects. Again we cannot define religion (or anything else) in its lowest terms. Like everything else, religion is a process, and no process can truly be judged or explained by its first beginnings. Just so, it would be ridiculous to judge of the life of a man by the microscopic cell as which he starts his existence. Here we have in view the whole spiritual side of man's nature, as we know it in humanity in general, and in the most spiritual examples of humanity. To what in the environment is this the response?

To this question, Christian Theism has its answer ready. It regards the whole environment as alive with a spiritual life. To it, God is not one element in the environment, but the whole, and transcending the whole. The very first beginnings of life, of sentience, were a response to that Universal Life, in which all life's possibilities, those we now know, and undreamt-of, unimagined possibilities beyond all range of human thought, exist. And hence each

advance in the creature is (corresponding to the complex reaction of organism and environment) at once a revelation of the nature of the Creator and of the capacity of the creature. It is easy to see how we have here an explanation of the origin of religion, to use an awkward phrase, from above to below, as we have already sought one from below upwards. From the former point of view we can speak of "revelation," in the more ordinary sense, from the latter of "response" or "reaction." The former is the theological, the latter the biological point of view. It goes without saying, that there can be, in the nature of things, no sort of conflict between the two. What Christian Theism claims to do is to carry the explanation one step, and that the final step, further back. Of necessity this must be, true or not, the final step, for it finds the root of religion in the ultimate rationality of the universe, in the Universal Reason Who is also the Universal Life.

According to this view we retain the essential meaning of revelation, implied in the word itself—God's disclosure of Himself to man. But we have changed and enlarged our notions both of the content and of the scope of revelation. We no longer think of revelation as a purely mechanical communication of ideas, as conveying information about God, as the imparting of a body of ready-made doctrines. Nor are the recipients of revelation purely passive. Rather, if revelation be a fact, the activity, the co-operation of two factors is necessary. It is just an instance of the

relation on which we have already dwelt at some length, the mutual interaction of environment and organism, in this case of the environment appearing in its truest and deepest aspect, as spiritual, and an organism which, having attained to some measure of spirituality, is capable of recognising and responding to an environment which, indeed, in its own nature, is spiritual through and through, but now at last is consciously perceived as such. Such attainment of the spiritual level of existence is not won by the organism except as the result of the influence upon it of the environment, but it implies, as all cases of progress imply, a latent capacity for such a development. This is to accept, but in a different sense from that intended by the writer, what Mr Huxley lays down as his main point: "The idea of God is a product of biological evolution." He calls it, indeed, "an inevitable product." But, from any point of view, I think that the less we have to do with such ideas as necessity or inevitableness, the better it will be for clearness of thought. Religion has indeed appeared. To say that it must have appeared is again to introduce a philosophical theory of determinism, which, whether true or not, has no bearing on the fact of its appearance.

It is this action of the environment as calling into activity, and eliciting the response of, man's spiritual nature, which is what we mean by revelation. But we have at this point to change our phraseology. For we are here in the region

of mental life, of ideas and aspirations, which, indeed, I should hold, belong to biology in the widest sense, for they are manifestations of living beings, but which can hardly be described in the same terms which we should use, for example, of the reaction of an amœba to food in its neighbourhood. We need to get rid of the old idea of revelation as concerned with theology. It is concerned with religion, with the religious experience of mankind, as its cause. Theology arises, even in its earliest and simplest forms, at a later stage, as the interpretation of that experience. Naturally, that interpretation must be in the current forms of thought, and is expressed in the terminology with which men are at the time familiar. A most fertile source of confusion is the failure to distinguish between these two things, religion and theology, the experience and the interpretation of the experience.

But for the present, I would lay stress on the width of this modern conception of revelation. It is no longer thought of as confined to one particular race, or one special religion. Wherever you get any sort of religion—fetishism, nature-worship, Judaism, Christianity—there you have revelation, the impact of the spiritual environment on the minds of men. Yet this view is not altogether new. A Christian Apostle, himself one, at least, of the greatest theologians of all time, addressing a heathen audience, lays down that " God did not leave Himself without witness " in those natural phenomena which led to

nature-worship. And in a great theological passage he speaks of a real revelation of God to men who stood far outside the area of what we speak of as "revealed religion," *i.e.* Judaism (Acts xv. 17; Rom. i. 19). This is simply to assert that the development of religion is one side of a single process, the other side being revelation. As man's receptivity increases, so does the clearness and fullness of the revelation.

Moreover, just as is the case at lower levels of life, progress has not been uniform, nor has it taken place over the whole field. If we say that Israel was the Chosen People, this does not imply that they were God's favourites, or that His choice of them was arbitrary. Their capacity was developed in that particular direction. Here, again, progress was not uniform. In certain Israelites a very high degree of responsiveness to the divine action was attained. These men we call the prophets. So clearly did they seem to themselves aware of an outside pressure, as it were, on their minds, that they could write: "Thus saith the Lord." Here is a close correspondence with a marked feature of human progress. That progress, in science, in morality, or in any other direction, has not been due to a general advance of mankind, or of any considerable section of it, as a whole. It has been due, in every instance which we can trace, to gifted individuals, great discoverers or great reformers. Their discoveries or teachings have, perhaps by slow degrees, become part of the social tradition

and inheritance of their nation or of the race. The average intelligence and the average brain have made no great progress since the days of the prehistoric reindeer hunters. In man, social evolution has taken the place of biological evolution. His religious development has followed the same path. In harmony with this is the Christian conception that vocation is to service. "The gifts and calling of God" are not for the individual benefit of him who receives them, or is called. They are to be used for the common good. On a large scale, Israel was chosen, or called, to be "a sacred school of the knowledge of God to all mankind."

The object of this argument has been to show that "revelation" and not "projection" is the more rational account of the origin and subsequent course of religion. We have endeavoured to establish the position that religion, instead of being man's attempt to invest the universe with his own hopes, ideals, and aspirations, is better explained as an instance, on a high level, of the response of an organism to its environment.

In the course of the argument we have given a wide meaning to "revelation," and have drawn what is now the familiar distinction between religion and theology. The former is an inward experience, the human response to the divine environment. The latter is the attempt to interpret that experience and to express it in words. It does not follow that that attempt is always a failure. But it may well be the case that all

theological interpretations are symbols of a reality greater than can either be formulated in thought or expressed in word. That, again, does not mean that all theologies are false; but it does mean that all, even the highest, are inadequate. Some theologies will be better interpretations of religious experience than others. And there have been, and are, an endless number of types of religious experience, each with its own theology. How are we to find our way amid such a complexity? We cannot deal directly with religious experience, for we cannot enter into the minds of other men. We can deal with their attempts to express that which is in their minds. Theology, not religion, is the proper subject-matter of critical examination. What standard, then, can we apply, by which to judge whether a given theology is low or high in the scale, less or more adequate as a symbol of the reality which is involved as the other, the objective, factor in religious experience?

That religious experience is a fact in the life of mankind, reaching back far beyond the dawn of history, and widely, if not universally, diffused, is undoubted. Of two rival explanations, (*a*) projection, (*b*) revelation, the second seems more rational (1) as the result of what we can learn of the nature of this experience itself; and (2) from consideration of the universal correlation between organisms and environment. Revelation has been taken in the broad sense of a spiritual environment, as the correlative of the spiritual nature of man. For short we may call this

"Reality," with a capital letter. The problem then reduces itself to this: What theology is the least inadequate symbol of Reality?

Let us make one point clear. According to the view here suggested, the Reality revealed in and through all religious experience is one and the same. Only, as that experience deepens and develops, its vision of the one Reality will become clearer, and the symbols which the corresponding theology, interpretative of that experience, employs, will in the same measure become less inadequate.

But what means have we of judging? What standard can we employ? Here I do not think science can help us much. If, indeed, any theology makes statements about the physical universe, science can, and indeed must, step in to criticise. But just so far as a theological system contains such statements, it ceases to be theology, and becomes instead science, good or bad—almost certainly the latter. To take a very familiar example, Christian theology is quite unaffected by the comparison of the modern cosmogonies with the ancient Hebrew cosmogony in the Old Testament. Nothing can be more absurd than to make theology responsible for the errors of theologians straying outside their own province. Sir Oliver Lodge is a most eminent physicist. His views on spiritualism, whether right or wrong, neither enhance nor diminish his authority on questions of physics. Mr Julian Huxley is a very great biologist. But his profound knowledge of biology does not

involve the truth or falsehood of his new theology. All truth is doubtless one. But each development of truth has its own methods of investigation.

I anticipate an objection. It may be said that at least psychology, and anthropology, and the comparative study of religion have a good deal to say in the matter. Some would be inclined to deny the title of science, at any rate of natural science, to all three. But this would not only be unjust. We have indicated the view that psychology is itself a branch of biology. And we would go so far as to include also under this head anthropology, of which the comparative study of religion is clearly a department. No doubt it would be admitted by all that they lack at present, and will probably always lack, the exactness which belongs to biology in its narrower, more usually accepted sense. Just in the same way the latter lacks the precision of chemistry and physics, as these in turn fall short of the exactness of pure mathematics. In proportion as the subject-matter of science is more concrete, as it partakes more of the nature of Reality, so do our methods and results fall short of the ideal of mathematical precision. It is only the abstract which is amenable to exact treatment.

Now, what can these three sciences give us in relation to religious experience? Just because religious experience is a particular form of mental activity found among human beings, they can give us a good deal. They can tell us something

of the structure of religious experience, something of its various forms, something perhaps of its mode of origin and its growth. This they have done already in some measure. And we may well expect further enlightenment from these quarters. But, unfortunately, they are all alike unable to deal with the question: What is the nature of the Reality which lies behind, and is revealed in that experience? In other words, they are entirely incompetent to criticise theology. Here we can only carry over from science its love of truth and its refusal to be deterred by difficulties. Science cannot deal with the ultimate. Scientific men may enter this region, but then they cease to be scientific, and become metaphysicians or theologians. Just so a theologian, if he expresses a view on the method of creation, has put off his theological and donned a scientific mantle.

Two points should be noticed in this connexion. It may well be that the earliest stages of religious experience are found by anthropologists to display exceedingly crude ideas, both of Reality and of the world. It might conceivably be possible to trace some kind of genetic connexion between these and higher stages. But such discoveries have no bearing on the claim of the higher theologies to express Reality under the most adequate symbols to which human thought can attain. It has very often been pointed out that the question of origin and that of validity are entirely distinct. If we can establish a genetic

connexion between the amœba and man, this does not degrade man to the level of the amœba. Even if the totemism of Australian aborigines represents the earliest stage of religious experience which we can reach, this does not reduce, say, Christianity to the level of totemism.

In the second place, recent psychology has taught us a great deal about religious experience, making use of such concepts as the instinctive basis of all human experience, auto-suggestion, and the herd-instinct. How far will such a treatment of it carry us? We may leave out of account, for our present purpose, the hypothetical nature of much of the new psychology. This, indeed, is no more than was to be expected in the case of a nascent science. It remains true that to discover the laws of any mental process, and to indicate the probable stages of its growth, has no bearing on the existence or non-existence of any reality in the external world to which that process may be related. That there is such a Reality to which religious experience corresponds, a stimulus from without to which it is a reaction, cannot be on rational grounds disputed. I do not think that this is too strong a statement. Certainly Mr Julian Huxley would not dispute it. The only question is: What is the nature of Reality?

Thus the appropriate natural sciences can give us much useful information as to the history and structure of religious experience. But they cannot supply us with a standard whereby to judge

the claims of the various theologies, or interpretations of that experience. For the task of theology is interpretation, is to tell us, if possible, something about the Reality to which the experience refers. Revelation is the link between Reality and the experience. Thus theology deals with the subject-matter of revelation. As we have seen, its results are expressed in language necessarily symbolic. To apply a standard to theologies of various kinds would be, ideally, to arrange these symbols in an ascending order of adequacy.

As natural science (in the wide sense in which that term includes anthropology and psychology) here fails us, we are left with only one alternative. This is, to apply our standard of values to the various interpretations before us.

Our sense of values has made its appearance in the course of evolution. For reasons already given, this fact neither discredits it, nor constitutes an explanation of its origin. It seems to belong, like our power of forming concepts, to the general rationality of the universe. Of course it is, or may be, possible to construct a real, or hypothetical, natural history of their development. But, once more, this is not to explain the thing developed. That the universe is rational is an ultimate fact. To deny this would be intellectual suicide. It would make a clean sweep of science, and of every other adventure of the human spirit. But what do we mean by rational? Surely, that which corresponds with one of the chief of our human values. The correspondence of the mind

of man with the universe in this respect we have already discussed in the first chapter. And we have the support of Mr Julian Huxley in claiming that the universe as a whole is on the side of human values.

As we are seeking to show that this is the standard, and the only standard which is available, to apply to the various interpretations of religious experience, which for short we call "theologies," it may be well to examine what exactly is meant by the term. Here we are on firm ground, where we meet with universal agreement. By human values we mean the things which men, at a certain level of culture, regard as of supreme worth. They are three in number: Truth, beauty, and goodness. Why they are three is clear, for they correspond to the three human activities, intellectual, emotional, and ethical. These three activities represent, on the highest level we know, that is, human personality, the three elementary mental processes which characterise all living, at any rate all animal, organisms—awareness, feeling, and conation. Values represent the respective ends of the three activities. As pursued, and therefore regarded as possible objects of attainment, they may be termed ideals.

As an intellectual being, man values and aims at truth. We may ask the ancient question: What is truth? And we receive two answers: Truth is correspondence with reality, or, truth means coherence with the general body of experience. But these two answers are in fact one. For

of a reality which lies beyond all experience, scientific, religious, or any other, we can form no notion.

As an emotional and moral being, a man values and pursues beauty and goodness. Can we define these?

We can go some way toward analysing the idea of beauty, and speak of harmony and the like. But there is always left a residuum which defies analysis. If we regard a sunset from the point of view of a physicist, it is only the result of the refraction of light from innumerable floating particles. But confessedly this is an abstract view, and fails to give us the reality of the sunset. It is an even more important element in that reality that it is a "thing of beauty." No physical science can deal with that aspect of it. And can we get nearer to an explanation of it than by saying that it satisfies our æsthetic sense? This, of course, may turn out to involve a theistic view of the universe. But we are not concerned at present with this point. We are only discussing beauty as one of the chief human values.

We may trace, with more or less probability, the growth of the moral sense. This subject we dealt with in the first chapter. The fact remains that we actually have a moral sense. And, like other things which have appeared in the course of "emergent evolution," it cannot be wholly explained or described in terms of its antecedents.

We possess, then, a certain standard of judg-

ment in our human values, which we undoubtedly apply to other things. The suggestion is, that we should apply this standard to the interpretation of religious experience.

But here we are met, once more, but on a higher level, by the theory of projection. Man, we are told, projects his own ideas and ideals, his wishes and aspirations, on to the external universe, and the result is his conception of gods or God.

In an earlier part of this chapter we found reason to think that projection does not adequately explain the origin of religion. It does not account for the primary religious emotion of awe. Here, again we refer to Professor Otto's *Idea of the Holy*. We saw that, on the other hand, religion is best expressed in terms of reaction to environment. There is, if we are right, a certain primitive and central core in religion, which is not due to projection. And this core abides essentially unaltered, however it may be, in Professor Otto's phrase, " rationalised."

But the question which confronts us now is this: Can we exclude projection from this later process of " rationalisation"; in other words, from the more advanced stages of religion?

Behind this, there is a graver and more momentous question. If we cannot exclude it, does it follow that religion is a mere creation of the human mind? Has it no other source than man's own thoughts of the universe? This is the central problem of all.

1. Assuming the truth of what we have said before about the central core of religion, projection is not merely insufficient to account for the origin of it. It also fails to give a complete explanation of religion at any stage, and that, too, in regard to its most essential feature. But that projection has entered into later theologies, more advanced attempts to account for religious experience, and that it has had a hand in moulding that experience itself, appears to be undeniable.

2. But while such a process is, in our view, undeniable, it is, and has always been, inevitable. This is our answer to the second question. The process has been equally undeniable and inevitable in the case of science. The plain fact is that, to use a homely phrase, we cannot get outside our own skins. We can never attain to a non-human, or supra-human, view of things. This is true of the most elementary mental processes, as well as the most advanced, of sensation and of perception, of science and metaphysics and theology. It is especially and most damagingly true of psychology, as Mr Collingwood has pointed out in *Speculum Mentis*. The man of science is anthropomorphic, as well as the theologian. But this does not hinder our acceptance of the results of science, the interpretation of our physical experience. And it should not hinder our acceptance of the results of theology, the interpretation of our religious experience. There is bad and good theology, and bad and good science. But

neither God nor the universe is man-made because we are forced to regard both through human spectacles. By all this we do not merely mean that our view of truth is always relative to our understanding. That is a familiar commonplace. We mean that undeniably and inevitably, in science, in philosophy, and in theology, we transfer something of ourselves into the external things we are contemplating. We think and speak of them in terms of our humanity. We cannot do otherwise. But to say that this fact invalidates the entire process, that we can arrive at no objective truth, is either to be a solipsist, where the boundary-line between insanity and metaphysics finally disappears, or it is to surrender oneself, without further struggle, to be engulfed in the morass of universal scepticism. How is it, in fact, that we believe in the existence of other persons besides ourselves? Here we have a clear case of projection, however disguised as " intrajection."

We therefore, without scruple, proceed to apply our human standard of values to the interpretation of religious experience.

CHAPTER III

DIVINE PERSONALITY

We have set before us a task which bristles with difficulties, no less a task, in fact, than that of evaluating the various interpretations of religious experience, which are systems of theology, by applying to them our standards of value.

1. The first of these difficulties is this: Can such a procedure be justified? For we cannot escape from ourselves—from the human standpoint. But such an objection lies equally against all scientific procedure, and all moral judgments. We cannot, if we are to preserve our sanity, adopt an attitude of universal scepticism. Problems of science, problems of ethics, problems of religion, can only be dealt with in terms of the human mind, and in accordance with those standards which our minds have learnt to apply under the teaching of racial experience.

Further, if such experience has been elaborated, and such standards gained, in the course of the evolutionary process, then we may fairly claim that they are as much integral parts of the universe as anything else, and share in its inherent rationality. Man is organic to the universe,

not less in his mental than in his physical attributes. Without begging the question, and assuming the theistic solution, it is safe to assert that the Universal Reason does come to some measure of self-consciousness in man. We cannot share Professor Bergson's view that the intellect has been evolved merely in order to deal with practical problems, and cannot be trusted as a guide to theoretic truth. If so, what becomes of the Bergsonian, or any other philosophy? What he says about intelligence can, in our judgment, be applied to instinct, which, so far as we can see, has been evolved precisely to meet the exigencies of practical situations. That is why it fits so closely to the facts of life. If we cannot trust our reason, without making the perilous assumption that it is an infallible guide to absolute truth, there is at least nothing else in which we can trust. We repeat that the fact that it has appeared in the course of evolution is exactly why we can rely upon it, not the reverse.

2. But though it is thus easy to dispose of the objection that the human standpoint is necessarily subjective, it is not so easy to deal with that based on the subjectivity of the individual human standpoint. Must not a man's judgment of theologies in general be biased in favour of the particular theology in which he himself believes?

I frankly admit that I can see no wholly satisfactory answer to this objection, which applies

equally, of course, to non-theist and to theist, to one who believes in Christianity and to one who rejects it.

But the situation is not really so hopeless as this might seem to imply. A man can at least make the effort to be impartial, to understand an opponent's position, and more, to enter into it by a sympathetic imagination; that is, to endeavour to feel in himself the weight of the arguments which appeal to him.

Further, if one is to establish one's own position, with any satisfaction to oneself, or any chance of commending it to others, one must strive to include within it all that seems to be true in other, and perhaps opposed, systems. Here is a most important point in regard to our present problem. In the judgment of the present writer, the peculiar strength of the Christian position is its catholicity or inclusiveness, the way in which it does include elements of value in other theologies. It claims to be true in the sense that it embraces, and includes in a higher and coherent unity, the truths by which other religions live. Here is the most fruitful line of Christian apologetics. I can see no nearer approach to absolute truth, that is, the nature of Reality, than that expressed in a system which does not set itself against all other systems, as being true against their falsity, but which can find room for the essential truths in them all, and claims to find room for them all in a wider synthesis. Whatever theology, Christian or not, can justify such a claim, has thereby

secured its claim to be accepted as the closest approximation to the truth.

This is the best answer we can make to the objection based on the subjectivity of the individual judgment. I think that it is the only satisfactory one, given our necessary limitations, intellectual and otherwise.

3. But a further difficulty suggests itself. Apart from all questions of subjectivity, how are we to proceed in applying our standards of value to systems of theology?

At first sight, it seems ridiculous to talk of applying the standard of truth, for that assumes we have already some other way of deciding which of them is true, or more true than others. We are brought up against the ancient question: What is truth?

This difficulty is more apparent than real. We have already seen that we can say a statement is true in two senses: (1) as being coherent with the rest of our experience: (2) as corresponding to reality. But, after all, these two meanings of truth are not to be dissevered from each other. If our experience is our only guide to reality—for reality outside experience is either meaningless or utterly incomprehensible—then coherence with the rest of experience is our only touchstone of truth. We have then to inquire, in regard to systems of theology, which of these (1) fits in with the rest of our experience; and (2) enables us best to harmonise our experience as a whole.

Here, too, we may bring in the leading thought of the previous section. That system is to be preferred which, in relation to other systems, exhibits most the character of inclusiveness.

The sense of beauty, as we shall see, receives its only satisfactory explanation if nature be a partial and temporal expression of a supreme and eternal Personality.

On the other hand, we are justified in applying the ethical test. We not only may—we must—ask whether there is any difference in the degree in which various systems of theology appear capable of satisfying our moral aspirations. We have, at the beginning of this chapter, defended the claim of the intellect as an instrument for ascertaining truth. But this does not involve the further assertion that it is the only instrument. It seems that we must draw a distinction between intellect and reason, at least for the purpose of clear thinking. Reason, we would say, is indeed our one and only instrument for judging of truth; but reason includes more than intellect. It embraces the whole inner life, not merely the power of drawing inferences, but the power of making moral discriminations, and whatever else can be included in our idea of ourselves as "rational." This term is not, in ordinary usage, and in fact cannot be, limited to our capacity of ratiocination.

4. The last difficulty in the way of our applying the standard of values to systems of theology, considered as rival interpretations of religious

experience, is the practical one, which of these various systems are we to select? It would be an endless task, and one demanding encyclopædic knowledge, to go through all of them. And some of them would be excluded, at our level of thought, by universal agreement. Here is a question largely of method.

But there is one great and outstanding difference. Some interpretations exclude, others admit, the idea of a personal God. Without making any further differentiation, we can at least apply our test to these two classes.

We might be tempted to ask: Can a system of thought which excludes the idea of personality in the source of the universe be fairly called a theology? Perhaps not, if we lay stress on etymology. But it would be absurd to say that Buddhism, for example, did not involve an interpretation of a genuinely religious experience. Buddhism, however, with its denial of the world and consequent thoroughly ingrained scepticism, is not likely to make a strong appeal to the modern man. I say this deliberately, having in view the present-day versions of it in theosophy.

Why does this ancient and most widely-spread religion—for we may not deny it that name—fail to make any appeal to the great majority of men of Western culture? Surely the reason is that, consciously or unconsciously, we apply to it that very test of value which we have claimed as the only applicable one to theologies in general.

We admit that it does conserve one value of

inestimable importance, the idea of the spiritual. But the cost is far too great. We cannot isolate the spiritual from the whole region of human experience. We revolt from the conception of desire as inherently evil. It represents something absolutely fundamental in all living creatures. If any meaning can be attached to the perilously vague term "life-force," it is surely to be found in the strivings, at first blind, then becoming more and more "suffused with awareness," of all members of the animate world towards ever fuller life. All things we value most have here their first beginnings. Conation, impulse, desire, becoming more and more blended with feeling and intelligence—it is a marvellous and moving picture. There are steps, new departures not wholly explicable in terms of the previous stages, but, for all that, an unbroken continuity between the movements of the amœba after its prey, and the quest of the philosopher for a solution of the world problem, or, higher still, the noblest and most unselfish affection which can unite human beings. Having all this in view, we can neither (*a*) jettison the whole thing as being of no ultimate value, nor (*b*) exclude the higher stages of the process from our conception of the spiritual. Remember, too, that we are asked to do this, because the source of human misery lies in desire. To the Western mind it seems truer to say that desire is the source both of all the happiness and of all the unhappiness which we experience. To kill desire is to destroy both. Nirvana,

whether it be unconsciousness, or even a blissful absorption into the Absolute, is at least the negation of individuality with all its restless strivings and unfulfilled aspirations, and therefore, to our minds, the very negation of what we value most. Browning strikes a truer note, truer, that is, to our standards of value:

> "Happy that I can
> Be crossed and thwarted as a man,
> Not left in God's contempt apart
> With ghastly smooth life, dead at heart,
> Tame in earth's paddock as her prize."

Certainly the Buddha contemplated a flight to regions remote indeed from "earth's paddock." But the conception that the struggle itself is of enduring worth is far nobler than that of the Indian sage.

Further, to our modern minds, influenced, I suspect, to an unknown degree by the Christian tradition, Buddhism breaks down before the ethical test. For while it indeed inculcates, and lays the greatest stress upon, the virtue of beneficence, it is all with a view to the spiritual advancement of the individual. Can there be a completer selfishness? No doubt parallels can be found in bastard types of Christianity. But you can only judge of a religion by its original and those types in which the original is most faithfully reflected. And we are here at an ethical distance immeasurably remote from Him Who came "not to be served but to serve," and to reveal the service of man not merely as a human duty, but as a duty

in the exercise of which man reflects most nearly the character of God Himself.

Christianity is indeed at the opposite pole of thought from Buddhism and all allied systems. It lays emphasis on personality: "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" But also it is just as emphatic in laying down that a personality worth having can only be won at the cost of absolutely selfless service and sacrifice. He only saves his soul, Christ taught, who loses it. And the spirit of sacrifice and service is not a means to an ulterior end. It is not the way of getting some reward, other than itself and different in kind, out of God, but the life of God Himself in the soul of man.

Buddhism, in contrast with Christianity, stands condemned when appraised by the standard of values.

Though Buddhism as a theology, or interpretation of religious experience, is little likely to appeal to the modern Western mind, the same cannot be said of that which Mr Julian Huxley has set out, especially in his two essays, "Rationalism and the Idea of God," and "Religion and Science." I take it that the view there expressed is one which does appeal to, and is accepted by, a very great number of thoughtful men. I speak without knowledge, but it appears likely that he here represents the majority of those who would call themselves Rationalists. It is a view which, in my opinion, we can fairly call a theology, in the wider sense of the word. For it is pro-

fessedly an interpretation of the religious experience of mankind in general, and also it is meant to serve, in his own words, as "the foundation of something constructive in religion," a "newly-moulded religion."

For myself, after a fairly careful study of these two essays, and of the others in the volume where these are to be found, I feel convinced that this view, or something like it, is the only tenable alternative, for the modern man, to Christianity. Therefore it deserves most careful consideration as a theology, and accordingly we must apply to it our test of values.

Essentially, it may be analysed into the following elements:

1. An account of the way in which the conception of a personal God has grown up.
2. The absurdities and immoralities into which this conception has led men: *tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.*
3. A scientific substitute for the orthodox idea of God.
4. Suggestions for the practice of a religion founded upon this.

This last point we may omit from the discussion. It is scarcely relevant to our investigation of the foundation, and if this can be shown to be insecure, there will be no need to examine it. But it may be said at once, that some of the suggestions under (4) are worth consideration on their

own account, even if we reject that upon which they are grounded.

The discussion is made simpler, if not easier, by Mr Huxley's firm grasp upon the supreme values of truth, beauty, goodness.

1. The Origin of the Idea of God.

In the paper called *Rationalism and the Idea of God* an account is given which the present writer is prepared to accept, with some reserves and limitations.

"In primitive societies, as the studies of a Frazer or a Rivers have shown us, the whole of life is enmeshed with religion, and there is scarcely an activity of man which is not spun round with religious emotion and ritual. Very often the idea of God has not in this stage been clearly formulated; there is simply a notion of *power*, of mysterious influence, sometimes partly crystallised round a primitive deity. Later, however, the power became frankly anthropomorphic, and Gods came into being—many or one. Man had projected the idea of that active agency he knew best—human personality—into his ideas of cosmic powers. Into the God thus fashioned there are always projected to a greater or less degree the ideals of the community; and, thus, at a certain stage of development, we find definitely tribal Gods."

This account, as I have said, one accepts with reserves and limitations. It does fairly represent modern anthropological orthodoxy. But these remarks may be made:

(*a*) As Mr Huxley would be the first to admit, it is only a partial view of a very complex problem. How complex the problem of the origin of religion is can be seen, for example, in Dr Malinowski's essay on "Magic, Science and Religion" in *Science, Religion and Reality*. But the idea of power, of mana (cp. Dr Marrett's *Threshold of Religion*), appears to offer the most helpful clue. There is very much more, however, to be said on the matter.

(*b*) The reference to a "primitive deity" in the above quotation is a little obscure. Mr Huxley may have in mind the All-Father of certain Australians, the Dorumalan of the Zulus, and the like, whom Andrew Lang called "The high Gods of low races." If we carry these back, as our writer seems inclined to do, into the earliest stage, that of animatism, we are making the problem still more complicated, and one of which the solution may lead us nearer to old-fashioned orthodoxy than we anticipate. But, at any rate at present, the question remains an open one.

(*c*) We would once more lay stress on the emotion of awe as an integral element in man's religious experience. As was pointed out in the last chapter, that experience seems best described as a response on the part of man to something in the universe which, whatever else may rightly be said about it, has, as a most distinctive property, that of exciting the complex, though hardly

analysable, emotion of awe. This point has been already discussed in the preceding chapter.

(*d*) A more important point is this: a more or less probable account of the way in which the idea of a personal God grew up has no bearing at all on the further and different question as to whether this idea is true or false. It has very often been pointed out that origin and validity are two entirely distinct problems. Our belief in the worth and dignity of man is not in the least degree affected by any view which we may hold as to his ultimate origin. We may trace that origin back to a relatively simple protoplasmic cell. At any rate it is true that none of us had any other beginning of life. But it would be absurd beyond measure to estimate the present worth of an individual life in terms of cellular theory. Indeed, the writer of the second chapter of Genesis assigns an even lower origin to man, in the inorganic world: "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the earth." Similarly, our conviction of the majesty and authority of the Moral Law remains unaffected by any anthropological theory of the first dim and crude beginnings of the ideas of right and wrong. In like manner, if men first arrived at the conception of a personal God or Gods by projecting their own personality into the universe, this has no bearing upon the truth or otherwise of the conception thus reached. Probably, however, the distinction between origin and validity is so generally

admitted that the point need not be further laboured. Although, doubtless, how men came first to believe in the personality of God is an interesting question, the really vital one is, as to whether the belief is true or false. This must be decided on quite different grounds, namely, by the application of the standard of values to this belief and its opposite.

This is really, for us, the critical division between theologies, understanding that word, as we have taken it all through, to mean rival interpretations of the fact of religious experience. Is there a personal God or no?

But first let us consider what is meant by the affirmative answer. The truth of a belief can neither be judged by its origin, as we have already seen, nor can it be judged, either, by the earlier and cruder forms of the particular belief.

Mr Huxley writes: "There is no reason whatever to admit that personality is a genuine characteristic of any knowable God." There is the issue in a nutshell.

1. I do not know whether I am right or not, but I am inclined to suspect that in some degree, small it may be, Mr Huxley's view has been influenced by the rather crude ideas of God and of personality which are no doubt presented in popular religion. Before we consider the alternative which he propounds as the basis of a "newly-moulded religion," we will try to state the oppo-

site position in a more rational form than that in which it is sometimes entertained.

God is not an isolated individual, a " person " in the popular sense of the word. Professor Clement Webb has pointed out that to call God a person is not orthodox Christian doctrine. The expression cannot be traced further back than the Unitarians of the sixteenth century. So to speak of Him is to make Him a member of a class, one of the great multitude of personal beings which occupy at any rate this world of ours, and possibly other worlds. It does not alter the position if we go on to say that He is infinitely greater than any of them or than all of them together, or even if we add that He has created them and is Himself the only uncreated person. The fundamental and fatal defect is that He still remains one of the many, and no modern man can entertain belief in such a God. He is infinitely less, on such a view, than any God in whom we can believe. Simply, God—if He be at all—cannot be a part of any whole. Either He is the whole, and then we get Pantheism, and, with a difference, Mr Huxley's view, and discard the idea of His personality; or else, somehow, the whole must be included in Him. God, in whom we can believe to-day, cannot be " a " God, but Reality itself, of which the universe is a manifestation in time and space, the Source and Ground of all being.

Here is no begging of the question. We only set out that view of the nature of God

which is in accord with ancient Christian orthodoxy, with what we believe to be a true philosophy, and which is quite certainly also in accord with the general trend of the modern mind. And we do so set it out, in order that it may have a chance of fair comparison with the opposed view. The popular idea has, we may repeat, no warrant in the Christian faith, which asserts personality in God and not that He is a person. Both intellectually acceptable and morally uplifting is the conception of St Paul: "In Him we live and move and have our being." One can make no sense of that great saying if He is but the highest member of the class of personal beings. The writer finds it quite impossible to state the true idea of God without bringing in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Before doing this, it will be of great interest to quote Mr Julian Huxley on this subject. The passage deserves careful attention.

"That some form of Trinitarianism is a reasonably natural method of symbolising the inevitable tripleness of inner experience, outer fact, and their interrelation, is obvious enough. In the particular Trinitarianism of Christianity, the reality apprehended to exist behind the forces of nature, is called the Father, the upspringing force within the mind of man, especially when it seems to transcend individuality and to overflow into what we designate as the mystical, is called the Holy Ghost, and the activity, personal or vicarious, which mediates between the individual and the

rest of the universe, reconciling his incompleteness and his failures with its apparent sternness and inexorableness, is called the Son."

We cannot indeed accept this view without grave modifications. But it presents a very refreshing contrast with the popular, and, we must add, extremely parochial idea of God. More, we must heartily welcome the recognition that the mind of man reflects in a sense the structure of reality. If, indeed, man is "organic to nature," this must be the case. It is only another way of saying that nature is steeped in rationality, and that this rationality may be pictured as coming to self-consciousness in man. We say "may be pictured," because we do not wish to commit ourselves to the view that the Absolute first attains to self-consciousness in the human mind. If the Christian doctrine of the Trinity be true, then this will account for the "inevitable tripleness" which seems somehow woven into our experience. After all these centuries, by a very different route we arrive at something like the position of St Augustine in the *de Trinitate*. It is one and not the least of the merits of this great thinker that he was the first to use the psychological approach to the doctrine of God.

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity may, I think, be thus expressed, if it be borne in mind that the expression is, and must be, only a partial one.

Reality is One. The unity of nature, the

supreme hypothesis, or postulate, of science, finds its explanation in the unity of God, its source.

Reality is essentially originative. In terms of Christian theology, this is the doctrine of God the Father, the πηγὴ θεότητος, the fountain of the Godhead, the Eternal Origin of Life within the Holy Trinity, the ultimate origin of all life, uncreated or created. In more modern language, the Father is God as He ever moves towards self-expression.

The self-expression of God is the Eternal Word. In time and space this self-expression is the universe. But behind the evolving universe is the Word, the time-less and space-less self-expression of the Father. He is the life, "the eternal life which was with the Father," from which the universe derives its existence. "That which has (in time) come to be, in Him was life."

He is the principle of rationality which holds the universe together, without which there would be no universe at all. "In Him all things hold together." As such, the universe, moving always towards a fuller harmony and integration, finds in Him its goal. "Unto Him are all things." Hence in the rational mind is a completer expression or disclosure of the Word than in inanimate nature or animate nature below the level of self-conscious intelligence. "The Word was the light of men."

At this point we cannot refrain from quoting, by way of parenthesis, a beautiful passage from

Professor J. Arthur Thompson's Gifford Lectures on *The System of Animate Nature*.

"Our belief is that the Logos is at the core of our system, implicit in the nebula, as now in the dewdrop. It slept for the most part through the evolution of plants and coral-like animals, whose dream-smiles are a joy for ever. It slept as the child sleeps before birth. It became more and more awake among higher animals, feeling and willing and knowing. It became articulate in self-conscious Man, and not least in his science."

To this fine restatement, in modern language, of part of the prologue to St John's Gospel, we would only add his first sentence, lest that lovely metaphor of the sleeping Logos — so true in the context — should be misunderstood. "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God."

But there is more to be said before we leave our exposition of what Christian theology has taught us to call the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The Logos is known by another name. He is the Son of the Father. Eternal self-expression is also, to use Origen's term, eternal generation. Thus, following our line of thought, it is not straining language too far to say that the universe is the Son of God. It is permeated not only by the spirit of rationality, but by the spirit of sonship. Here also man appears as the completest expression of the latter as well as

of the former. The sonship that is in the universe arrives at self-consciousness in the ethical nature of man. Going behind all anthropological theory, here is the fundamental ground of religion, the striving of man, at first most dimly conscious, but ever growing more conscious, to find the fulfilment of his self-hood in God. "The Universe," Dr Inge has finely said, "is the hymn of praise sung by the Creative Logos to the glory of God the Father." The beauty and the joy of nature is that agelong hymn. By man, at length, the hymn is sung with growing and deepening apprehension of the meaning of the melody without and within him.

There is an eternal relation between the Father and His Word or Son. This relation belongs to the inner life of the Godhead. It is that persistent movement of the divine towards self-expression which in ethical language is love, in theological language God the Holy Spirit. That relation which exists between the Father and the Son, within the Godhead, is mirrored in the time and space world by what we call Creation, the relation between God and the universe. We are here once again on the track of St Augustine's thought. He identifies the Holy Spirit with love itself, *ipsa caritas*. The Third Person of the Holy Trinity is the divine love, operative both in the eternal self-expression of God, which is the Logos in Himself, and in His temporal self-expression, which is the Logos manifested in the universe.

The following paragraph is, once again, in the nature of a parenthesis. It is added because I feel that we must not belittle difficulties. Only I would say that difficulties, intellectual problems which to all appearance are insoluble, are not peculiar to Christian theology. They crop up from time to time both in science and in philosophy. By an irresistible internal compulsion, the restless mind of man, in this direction and in that, pursues its groping way towards truth, until at length it finds itself brought up, as it were, against a stone wall. That which I have in mind is one of the biggest of all difficulties: Is the universe eternal? In one sense, on the Christian view, it is. The inner reality of the universe is the Logos. And the Logos is the eternal self-expression of the Father. And the love of God, the relation between the Father and the Logos, is eternal. "The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal." But what of that which we call the material universe? Did it have a beginning in time? That collocation of material particles which we know as the universe did undoubtedly have such a beginning. More accurately, the present state of the universe undoubtedly began, and I suppose, if we can imagine a prodigious enlargement of the scientific intellect and a like increase of the instruments of its research, its date could be accurately ascertained. "There was when it was not," which is precisely what the Catholic Faith forbids us to say of the Logos. But if the Father never was

without the Logos, if the divine reason cannot but express itself, if the divine love ever seeks its object, must that Word and that Spirit always find a further expression and a further object in some sort of material universe? Are we to conceive, or attempt to conceive, of arrangements and rearrangements of material particles "from everlasting to everlasting?" Stated thus, the problem no longer belongs to Christian theology, but to human thought as such. How can we think of a beginning, or, for that matter, of an end of the universe? Thus not indeed an answer to, but a measure of real insight into the nature of, the difficulty emerges. The difficulty lies not in the object of thought, nor in any construction of thought, be it a theistic or a non-theistic view of the universe (for the same difficulty oppresses both), but back beyond all these, in the nature of our human thought. A beginning and a non-beginning are alike beyond our power of conception. We cannot escape from the trammels of our finitude, or, in more colloquial phrase, get outside our own skins. At least we may say this; as often happens, Christian theology does not indeed solve but does go some way towards lightening the burden of the problem.

If we do accept the doctrine of the Trinity, God has never been without an object of thought or an object of love. We may add that otherwise He could be neither Reason nor Love, nor, in fact, have any existence at all. The Father, the Word or the Son, and the Holy Spirit are that

Reality, that eternal Reason and Love, which, in their time-space revelation, we call the universe.

In this Reality the time process must somehow be both included and transcended. There is an admirable discussion of "Time and Eternity" in Lecture XVIII of Professor Pringle-Pattison's Gifford Lectures on *The Idea of God*. It is going too far to say bluntly that time is "unreal." It is however unreal in the sense in which any abstract conception is unreal. It is, as the Professor says, the abstract form of the experience of a living, active, purposive creature. We may go a step further, and say it is the abstract form under which an evolving universe perforce presents itself in our experience. To that abstract form, the notions of beginning and end belong. To ask whether the universe had a beginning in time, is to apply a conception which has its meaning wholly within our temporal and finite experience to that Experience which is eternal and infinite. That is why our thought is at this point baffled. Probably we can never get beyond the idea of St Augustine, that time and the material universe had their beginning together. From the standpoint of Christian theology, the one important point is that the universe is wholly dependent upon God, and that He is in no sense dependent upon it.

We return to the main line of our exposition. It follows, from what has been said, that in the Christian view the Reality of which the universe is the time-space expression, is itself personal.

And this is a very different thing from saying that God is a person. The Ground and Reality of all existence cannot be, we repeat, a part of any whole. Reality is personal, not merely in the sense of including all persons (we quote St Paul once more: "In Him we live and move and have our being"), but in the sense that self-conscious, self-determining beings, capable of communion with each other, reflect the inner structure of Reality more faithfully than the inanimate part of the universe, or than animate beings which fall short of developed, or rather developing personality. Self-consciousness, self-determination, capacity for communion, together make up the concept of personality. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is in fact the most adequate statement which we can conceive of two closely correlated truths that God alone is completely personal, and that men, so far as they are moving towards the ethical ideals of a completely controlled, harmonious, integrated life, and of the communion with each other which has its foundation in love, service, and sacrifice, are moving towards the divine ideal, the attainment of that personality which is, in absolute perfection, in God alone.

There is also another, more practical, religious rather than theological, interest involved in the idea of the personality of God. It is this: that we believe that communion, personal intercourse, is possible between man and God. This is not a mere consequence, it is part of the meaning of

divine personality. Mr J. Huxley admits prayer into his religion of the future. But, just because in his view God is not personal, his idea of prayer is far away from the commonly accepted Christian notion of it. He says: "If you have followed me, you will agree that it is impossible for me and those who think like me to believe in God as a person, a ruler, to continue to speak of God as a spiritual Being in the ordinary way. Consequently, although the value of prayer persists, in so far as it is meditation and a self-purification of the mind, yet its commonly accepted petitive value must fall to the ground."

Now here several points of interest arise.

(1) There is the clear recognition that prayer is bound up with the personality of God.

(2) But this personality is not conceived on the lines of the Christian doctrine, which we have tried to state above. We have, instead, the conception of "God as a person, a ruler," which is anthropomorphic in the wrong sense and in a very high degree. As has been shown, such a crude conception, though it may be found in popular religion, is no part of the Christian teaching about God, which is in fact definitely opposed to it. A great deal of Mr Huxley's criticism of Christianity is based upon what is not Christianity at all. "God is a person" is an admirable summary of the Unitarian view. But that whatever there is of abiding worth in the conception of personality exists in God, is the Christian view.

(3) Part of what is meant by His personality is, as we have said, that a real communion is possible between us and Him. We do not argue: "God is a person; therefore we can talk to Him," but rather that on certain grounds we believe that the supreme Reality is of such a nature that we can have conscious intercourse therewith, and that this is at any rate an important part of what we mean when we attribute personality to that Reality. But further, on the Christian view of the nature of God, communion is actually realised in a transcendent way in the Divine Being. The human attitude of communion with God is a temporal reflection of an eternal reality. "God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts whereby we cry Abba, Father." "The Spirit Himself maketh intercession. . . . And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit." This profound thought we owe to Professor Clement Webb, in *God and Personality*.

(4) It is of course obvious that, on Mr Julian Huxley's premises, the "petitive value" of prayer "must fall to the ground." It is a question whether any value at all remains. For, if God be only a name for the sum of the powers in the universe, or the idea of them organised in the human mind, prayer, naturally, can only have a subjective value, and as soon as this fact is discovered, this value too will vanish. As Thouless points out in *The Psychology of Religion*, the sub-

jective value of prayer depends upon its being believed, by the person who practises it, to have an objective reference. If this reference disappears, so will the subjective value of prayer, whether it be used for "self-purification of the mind" or any other purpose. We cannot go on fooling ourselves indefinitely.

(5) But if Mr Huxley has failed to grasp the Christian doctrine of the personality of God, so also, we must add, has he failed to grasp the Christian idea of prayer. For he says that, if we give up, as he and those who think with him feel themselves bound to give up, the belief in the personality of God, the "commonly accepted petitive value" of prayer "must fall to the ground." But instructed Christians are very far indeed from regarding this "petitive value" as the chief, still less as the only function of prayer. To them prayer is a far bigger thing. It is communion with God, a communion which by the necessity of the case, and in accordance with the very meaning of the word, is two-sided. As such, its "petitive" aspect falls into the background. It is not a means of getting things we want done. It is the raising of the whole personality into union with Him in whom it is fulfilled. It includes adoration and aspiration, thanksgiving and intercession. It includes that quiet in which we listen, and, as we believe, not in vain, to the voice divine. Certainly it includes petition, but only as one, and that by no means the most

important, of its many aspects. And all conceivable petitions, all human goods, are summed up in "Thy will be done." We pray, not to bring down the divine will to our level, but to raise our own will to the level of the divine. And, further, we believe that prayer is a way of getting that divine will done, and has countless good effects on us and on those for whom we pray. In other words, so far as we really pray, we are permitted to be "fellow-workers with God."

The object of this digression, if digression it can be called, is to complete our account of the Christian view of the personality of God. We mean by that, among other things, that personal intercourse between Reality and ourselves is possible, as it would not be if the supreme Reality were an impersonal power, or the sum of impersonal powers.

All this is no argument. It is a statement of that particular theology, the Christian theology as interpretative of Christian religious experience, in which the idea of the divine personality is most developed, in order to compare it with another theology in which that idea is absent, by the application of the standard of values.

In order to complete this statement, it is necessary to add that the doctrine of the Trinity is not an abstract theory, but confessedly an interpretation of experience—the experience of the first disciples of Jesus Christ who were led to see in Him a unique revelation of the divine, and who became conscious of a new spiritual

energy working in themselves, which they identified with the Spirit Whom their Master had promised to send upon them. The doctrine is the later formulation of this experience in terms borrowed from the philosophical terminology of the time. But we have seen that the doctrine itself stands for just this : that the Reality of the universe includes all that is of abiding worth in our conception of personality.

It will be better now, before attempting to estimate the value of this theology, to pass on at once to a statement of a rationalistic type of theology, such as that contained in *Rationalism and the Idea of God*.

It must be borne in mind that the old attitude of hostility to religion as such has long been given up. This change is the result of a broader outlook. Religion is now seen to be a profoundly important factor in human life, and an apparently ineradicable feature of human experience. I quote the last paragraph of the essay:

" It is the task of Rationalism to see that religion, this fundamental and important activity of man, shall neither be allowed to continue in false or inadequate form, nor be stifled or starved, but made to help humanity in a vigorous growth that is based on truth and on constant contact with reality."

Let us, then, before we apply our test to the Christian idea of God, consider what is offered to us in its stead.

Now we want to state very carefully the view of

God which is taken by our writer in *Rationalism and the Idea of God*. It is a view very persuasively stated, and claims to account for the origin of the idea of the divine personality. In our opinion it is, for our thought of to-day, the only tenable alternative to the Christian doctrine of God. It is also, we believe, a typical and representative view, which fairly reflects the attitude of those who would claim the name of Rationalists.

He retains indeed the name and the concept of God. But the concept is widely different from that which the name represents for Christians. For him it includes two distinct but united elements: (1) the powers operating in the universe; (2) those powers organised into a unitary whole in our minds. This is, indeed, the way in which the idea of God has always arisen. But we are justified in retaining the idea if we cease to attribute personality to the reality thus apprehended. This attribution has been due in part to "a projection of the idea of (our) personality into the idea of God," while in part it is "due to the idea of God being organised by our mental activity to be of the same general type as is a normal personality—as something into which concepts of power, of knowledge, of feeling and will all enter, with such interconnections between its parts that, like a personality, all its resources are capable of mobilisation at any one point." This view is "a purely symbolic and not very accurate presentation of certain fundamental facts." The rationalistic view, on the other hand,

discards the outworn symbols of the past, that is, the attribution of personality to God and all the doctrines based on it, and attains to a clearer, and therefore more truly religious, view of reality. A quotation from another essay, *Religion and Science*, will make still clearer the theology of our author:

"We may call the sum of the forces acting in the cosmos the manifestations of God, who in this case must be the Absolute God, and unknowable except through these manifestations. Or we may confine the term God to its anthropological usage, as denoting the object of human religion, in which case we must admit that the term God, as understood by man, is constituted by man's idea of the forces acting in the cosmos, so that not only are these forces involved, not only a possible Absolute God behind them, but also the organising power of the human mind."

With this Absolute God we have therefore no concern. He is not even a possible "object of human religion." His existence may perhaps be implied in the mystic experience, "where the mind seems to touch the Absolute and the Infinite." "The sense of finality and utter reality attendant on such experience is difficult to bring into line with our idea of progress." The words of the Dean of St Paul's are quoted in this connexion: "Spiritual progress must be within the sphere of a reality which is not itself progressive." But our author goes on: "I wish you here to agree to my adopting the second alternative and giving

the name of God to the sum of the forces acting in the cosmos as perceived and grasped by the human mind." It is, then "God" in this sense, and not a possible "Absolute God," who will be the centre of the religion of the future.

God as so conceived is one. But He has several —in fact—three aspects.

1. As "mere power operating in the vastness of the stellar universes." As such, He is "apprehended only as orderly, tending in a direction which appears to be in the long run inimical."

2. As revealed in the whole process of life on our planet. "This aspect of God is our refuge and guarantee." For, as we have seen, (*a*) the tendency of life has been, on the whole, progressive: (*b*) this progress has been, once more on the whole, in the direction of human ideals. And, it is important to notice, "the direction of biological progress is the continuation of a line of development marked out, within the opposed inorganic domain, even from the first."

3. As the sum of the directive forces operating in man. These forces are "our instincts, our needs, our values, and our ideals." These, organised in two ways, (*a*) in an increasing unity of the individual life and an increasing fellowship of mankind; and (*b*) in an ever greater degree of correspondence with the outer world, constitute the "directive power" in human history.

It is not very hard to trace here a parallelism, of

course with great and even fundamental differences, to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, as we have stated it above. The Father is the Eternal Source, the Son is especially manifested in the vital forces of the cosmos : "That which has come to be in Him—the Logos—was life": the Holy Spirit is God immanent in man. It is of some interest to note this, but it would manifestly lead to hopeless confusion of thought to identify the two views, and still more manifestly unfair to build an argument upon the resemblance.

It is very important to notice the two components of the idea of God: (*a*) the outer component, the sum of the forces of the cosmos: (*b*) the inner component, these forces as organised in the human mind. "God in this sense is the universe, not as such, but so far as grasped as a whole by a mind, and through it the whole course of events." More shortly : "God is outer world organised as idea."

We have thus placed, side by side, two conceptions of God, the Christian conception and that of modern Rationalism. It would be equally wrong to overlook a certain deep resemblance, extending beyond the Trinitarian likeness, and the deep cleavage between them.

It will be more convenient to postpone our criticism of both to the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEST OF HUMAN VALUES

In this chapter we propose to compare the Christian conception of God with that of Mr Julian Huxley as a typical example of a modern rationalistic conception, with a side-glance at one or two variants from the type. The type example, however, is so attractively and persuasively set forth, that the writer's own feeling is: "It is either the Christian God, or this." I do not see in fact any choice between Theism, which we use as a short expression for the Christian view, and some such form of Pantheism, with as little emphasis as may be on the θεὸς side of it. There is, of course, the alternative of refusing to make any choice at all. This means, in practice, a decided inclination towards the second view. If the modern man is not a convinced Christian, he is likely to identify the cosmos with God, and to build up a quite respectable kind of religion upon the basis of that identification. Let us be quite clear that both views are theological. It would be narrow-minded to deny the title to the second view. It would show a complete misapprehension of the real meaning and status of theology. Theology, as we have

seen, is the interpretation and expression of religious experience. This covers both Christian and rationalistic statements. In the former case, the interpretation is the more spontaneous, arising as it did, at least in its earliest stages, out of the heart of the experience itself, while, on the other hand, its materials were limited. In the latter, the scope of inquiry is widened beyond comparison, embracing the researches of anthropologists in all parts of the world, and among the most varied races, and including all stages of development. But, as against this, the note of spontaneity has died out altogether and thought has taken the place of life. Both alike, however, in accordance with the terms of our definition, have a right to the name of theology.

The great cleavage is of course the question of divine personality. With this subject the last chapter was in part occupied. We saw there that the issue is not: Is God a person or no? but, does Reality include, however it may transcend, that which we call personality, and regard as the characteristic of human beings among living organisms; or are we to think of Reality as personal only in the sense that it includes all finite persons?

The question is absolutely vital. For, in the writer's judgment and that of many other people, religion is essentially communion with God—"prayer" in the widest sense. And practically, the personality of God means that such communion is possible.

The issue is between a theology which asserts and a theology which denies the divine personality. And the question is, which is to be preferred when we apply to them both our scheme of human values?

We have already given our reasons for thinking (*a*) that this is the only way in which a judgment between them is possible; and (*b*) that the test is a valid one.

(1) Divine personality explains the origin of human values and alone secures them from the charge of mere subjectivity. Truth, goodness, beauty, whatever else they are, at least are known to us as ideas existing in human minds. It is by possession of these ideas that human minds are distinguished, as far as we can see, from animal minds. No animal ever pursued truth for its own sake. No animal has risen to the conception of the moral ideal. No animal, in all probability, has paused to admire a sunset.

But these are not merely ideas. We judge them to refer to realities, and realities of transcendent worth. They are, we judge, of so great worth that all other goods are not merely not to be compared with them, but owe what worth they do possess to the measure in which they can be enlisted into their service. We have thus to account not merely for the existence of these ideas, but for the judgments of value associated with them. There is a third characteristic which also has to be accounted for. In the case of all three—

truth, beauty, and goodness—the idea is attended both by a conviction of the reality for which it stands, and also by the sense that that reality has not been attained, perhaps is unattainable by us. This sense of failure, we must notice, is most strongly marked in the case of those who, by the admission of their fellows, have come nearest to attainment. It is the man who has devoted his life and a mind of no common capacity to the pursuit of truth, who is most convinced of his ignorance. It is the saint who feels and confesses that he is "chief of sinners." It is the supreme artist who realises how far he has fallen short of perfect expression of the vision he has seen.

These are facts well-known, however we explain them. I suggest that the common explanation is also the true one: that our human values of truth, goodness, and beauty have an objective, as well as a subjective, existence; that there is an absolute truth, an absolute beauty, and an absolute goodness; that this is the explanation of the highest reaches of human life, of man's ideals, his ceaseless pursuit of them, his perpetual dissatisfaction. Thus reason, conscience, and the æsthetic sense will be the marks of man's kinship with the divine, or rather, one would prefer to say, of the divine in man.

Of course it would be possible to construct a purely psychological account of the whole matter. To some extent this has already been done. We may thus have a natural history of the genesis and development of reason, conscience, and the

sense of beauty. Even if the scientific theory has gaps in it, we can imagine them filled up. As one thinks of it, the broad outlines of such a theory begin to take shape. Its foundations will obviously be the first dim beginnings of awareness, feeling, conation, in the animalculæ, even if we do not get behind these perhaps "anthropomorphic constructions" to the tropism and the reflex. All this is most interesting, and quite possibly true, although, from the nature of the case, all direct proof is lacking. But, granting it all, what we have here is a hypothetical description of a process, not an explanation of it.

Here is at least an explanation: that all the time God has been drawing all creation upwards towards Himself. Put it in another way—God has been in increasing measure, so far as it has been "able to bear" Him, immanent in His creation, so that we can discern an ascending scale, a *scala mundi*, from the nebula containing the potency of life up to the Incarnation. The symbols of theology at least hint at an explanation, and have as much standing in the world of thought as the hypotheses of science, which are attempts—we may hope increasingly adequate attempts—at description. Surely it is not too daring to suggest that symbolic explanations and scientific descriptions are complementary the one to the other, and that both are needed for that picture of reality which we must, perforce, try to construct as best we may.

What is certain is that truth, beauty, and good-

ness are for us ultimate values, the best "goods" which life has to offer, so that no other "goods" can enter into competition with them. The sensual, or even sensuous life, is by us judged as falling short of what life ought to be, however we explain the "ought" in this case. It is also certain—here we follow Mr J. Huxley—that the universe is on our side in this matter, in the sense that not only has the consciousness of these values evolved in the process of life, but that there is visibly a "movement towards a realisation of the things judged by the human mind to have value." "The human idea of value finds its external counterpart in an actual historical direction in phenomena." The consciousness of these values seems, for the reason given above, to point to their existence in an absolute form. We cannot even conceive of their complete realisation on the plane of human existence, yet that they are so realised elsewhere seems to be involved in our constant sense of incompleteness and striving towards a goal which yet ever recedes as we advance in its direction.

The doctrine of divine personality harmonises and explains all these lines of thought. For it means that there is an Absolute Mind in and for which these values exist; that nature is the partial expression in time and space of this mind; that the human mind reflects it less inadequately than other parts, or products if you will, of nature.

We may add a third certainty to the two mentioned above. Values can only exist in

reference to a mind. In recognising not merely their existence in human minds, but that evolution has tended, on the whole, in such a direction, we have at least risen to a spiritual view of the universe.

But our present point is this. No ultimate view of the universe can do such justice to all the facts included in the human consciousness of values—their supreme worth, their harmony with biological progress, the sense of incompleteness in their attainment, as that which finds as the origin of all, the unitary and guiding principle of all, a Mind of which our minds are dim reflections.

(2) Further, the personality of God is not a mere vague theory about the possible nature of Reality. As it explains and guards the supreme values of human life, so each of these seems to find in this conception its satisfaction and fulfilment.

(*a*) Truth, as we have seen above, is another name for an absolutely coherent experience. When we judge, rightly or wrongly, a statement to be true or false, we mean that it fits in, or fails to fit in, with the rest of our experience. Now, there is a certain standard or normal experience, both of humanity as a whole, and in the various departments of human thought. In each of these senses, experience presents gaps and contradictions, fails to reach the ideal of a perfectly consistent and coherent whole, that is, of absolute truth. Further, experience, as we know it, is

always the experience of persons. There is no such thing as Experience, spelt with a capital letter, which exists by its own right, a mysterious entity, independent of persons whose experience it is. Hence, unless we assume some person or persons to be infallible, we give up the idea of absolute truth. It may, of course, be argued, with some show of plausibility, that human experience is a growing whole, growing both in extent and in internal coherence. Thus we may approximate ever more closely to the ideal of absolute truth, even if we, that is, humanity in the widest extent, can never hope fully to attain to it. But further thought will show that this position is hopeless, this trust ungrounded. For what guarantee have we for such sublime confidence in the future of human minds? We have no guarantee of an ever-increasing advance of human experience towards that inclusive and coherent and consistent whole which would be our nearest conceivable approach towards absolute truth.

Now, the doctrine of the personality of God means not, as we have repeatedly insisted, that we have to add one more to the multitude of persons already existing, but this: that ultimate Reality is itself of the structure of such an Experience as we have been imagining. Hence Truth is independent of and objective to all finite personal minds. At the same time, it is not independent of personal experience, for this, as we have seen, would be a contradiction.

Whether or no there are other arguments which can be advanced in favour of this doctrine, or whether or no there are insuperable objections to it, is by no means our present concern. Our submission is that this doctrine offers the fullest satisfaction to and explanation of the value which we assign to truth in our scheme of human values. It assures us that there is such a thing as absolute truth, and encourages us in our pursuit of truth in our special department. If man was made for God, to attain to fellowship with Him—here we venture on the region of Christian theology—then we can understand that ineradicable desire, that unwearied quest of truth, that is exhibited in the noblest human minds. If this, or anything like this, be true, then every fresh scientific discovery is, on one side, the result of human effort; on the other, a new revelation of God, in response to man seeking Him. An atheistic biologist, if we can find such a person, is not far from the kingdom of God if his search for truth be single-hearted. Some minute, hitherto unknown discovery in bio-chemistry tells us something about God of which we were before unaware.

This identification of truth with personality ought not to be difficult to those who believe in One Who said: "I am the Truth."

(*b*) The æsthetic values are, as we have hinted, the most difficult to discuss, from whatever standpoint we approach them.

On the whole, it appears to be true that beauty is a purely mental "thing." It is a perception—

and perception is mental or nothing—which supervenes in minds at a certain degree of development, on the occurrence of certain more or less complex sensations. Of course these sensations have their objective counterparts in the external world, and in resultant changes in nerve tissue. We are not concerned to deny that the æsthetic perception has its physical correlates. We can only be thankful that we are not here called upon to discuss the "psycho-physical problem." But the perception of beauty, like all others, is not the same thing as, but supervenes upon, these sensations with their physical correlates.

When I pass the judgment; "This sunset is beautiful," I am not making an assertion about the refractions of light from invisible floating specks of dust, or about the action of the stimulus resulting therefrom upon the retina or optic nerve, or about the further supervening result of the sensation of various colours and their groupings. I am asserting the existence of a certain perception in my mind, and presumably in all or some other minds constituted like my own. Philosophers may attempt to enumerate the elements which constitute this perception, or help to excite it, such as harmony, certain forms of outline, or the like. But the perception itself, however true some scheme of analysis may be, is in itself as completely unanalysable, as incapable of being constructed out of its constituent elements as is the emotion of religious awe. There are countless varieties of degrees in which this

perception exists, and an immense diversity in the objects which excite it in different minds and at different stages of culture. But to hold that beauty exists as a perception is not to make it a purely subjective thing, or to lower its status as one of the principal values of human life. It belongs, as truth belongs, to personality, which is the most real and valuable thing we know. And the recognition of a supreme personality as the form of the final Reality of the universe, as the source of all beauty, both offers an explanation of its existence and also rescues it for ever from the realm of mere subjectivity. It makes it, on the contrary, as real and as objective as anything can be.

We need to remember the lesson which the Dean of St Paul's has taught us, that beauty, not less than truth or goodness, is an inherent quality of the divine life. The student, the artist, the prophet, are all of them interpreters of God. The writer of these lines cannot help thinking that in some such direction as this we may find a solution of a phenomenon which has puzzled him and probably others, namely, the occurrence of forms of rare and delicate beauty in microscopic structures, such as the shells of diatoms, which can scarcely be accounted for on the principle of selection. Such exquisite geometrical designs can have no survival value. If our main contention be true, then God values beauty for its own sake. The thought may serve somewhat to abate our human pride. We can no longer

hold, for this among other reasons, that the world, not to speak of the universe, exists solely for the sake of man. Truth, beauty, and goodness, while constituting the supreme values of human life, have their worth in themselves, apart from man's discernment or appreciation. This reflection is, so to speak, a by-product of the doctrine of the divine personality.

(*c*) We come to the last member of the triad. We have already said a good deal about the evolutionary view of the moral sense, and have pointed out that such reconstructions are in any case, from the nature of things, hypothetical, however probable, and that the question of origin must be carefully kept apart from that of validity. To derive our idea of goodness, on the well-known lines, from taboo, herd-instinct and the like, is neither to explain away goodness, nor even to begin to account for the felt authority of the moral law. We may add a further consideration, which we owe to Professor A. E. Taylor's invaluable essay in *Evolution in the Light of Modern Thought*. Evolution is a process of ordered change, and cannot be explained from anything which itself changes. It is the manifestation of that which is eternal, which exists apart from its revelation in the time-space universe. And this principle is never more in place than when we are dealing with possible origins of moral ideas.

Now, quite clearly, goodness wholly belongs, as we have seen that truth and beauty belong,

to personality. Apart from personal life, goodness, in its full and proper sense of the good for its own sake, has no meaning whatever. Whatever faint beginnings we may detect in the world of animal life, are precisely what we might expect if the doctrine of the Logos (see Chap. I) is the final explanation of all evolutionary process. Further, just as in the case of the origin of religion, so here we may employ the biological conception of organism and environment, and consider the " thirst for righteousness " as a reaction to something which is absolutely fundamental in the widening environment of an organism which has come to be in touch with spiritual, that is final and all-embracing Reality.

Nor does it in any way conflict with this view, that men's ideas of morality vary enormously from age to age, in different cultures, and even in individuals in the same stage of culture. We meet with the same phenomenon in the case of religion. Progress we believe there has been, but progress not uniform, nor without periods of deteriorisation or stagnation. This is exactly what Mr J. Huxley shows to be true of biological progress. Nor can we believe that there is antithesis between revelation and discovery, as has been held in some quarters. These two terms, as has been pointed out already in regard to religion, are strictly correlative and complementary. Crude ideas of religion, crude ideas of morality, do not disprove that religion and morality are alike products of revelation, if we

take that term in the widest, which I believe to be at the same time the truest sense, of the action of the divine on and in the minds of men. Both alike are of the nature of communications, but communications which, however divine in origin, are humanly conditioned. The alternative to revelation is that both alike are products of haphazard or of determinate evolution. But the former is contrary to one of the fundamental postulates of the scientific, or any rational view of the universe, that nothing happens by chance, that chance is only another name for our ignorance; while the latter at once suggests the question, determined by what? and leads us to some source outside evolution. The point here, however, is simply this, that the existence of crude and imperfect forms of morality and religion is not disproof of their divine origin. And whence is the standard of judgment, by which we pronounce certain forms to be crude and imperfect, itself derived?

But here we are not concerned so much with the history of the moral sense, as with its content. Can we make any approach to a definition of goodness?

Here we trench on a subject of great complexity and difficulty. It would seem almost impertinent to touch lightly on a topic which has been dealt with by generations of eminent ethical thinkers, among whom endless varieties of opinion have prevailed. Yet the necessity of the case forces on us some expression of a personal view, which can only be brief and, more than that, which

will appear to ignore arguments on the other side.

It seems, then, to the writer, that the verdict of the moral reason is decisively against the various forms of utilitarianism. Goodness, righteousness, whatever one chooses to call the content of the moral sense, is not based upon any sort of calculation, even in the unselfish sense, of what will tend to produce the greatest and most diffused well-being. Such an explanation fails to account for the feature which is the one distinguishing characteristic of the moral reason, namely, its quite peculiar authoritativeness. There is nothing in all our experience to compare with this. Goodness is presented to us not simply as idea, or perception, but as that which commands our unquestioning obedience. The notion of consequence, of the results to ourselves, or even, at least in the majority of cases, to others, is simply excluded.

Of course this feeling of authority may be explained, on the evolutionary theory of ethics, as the inheritance from a remote past, of the operation of taboo, or the herd-instinct, upon our ancestors. Once more we repeat that, even if this account be valid, to explain how a thing came to be is not to explain what it is. The gap is immense between such crude beginnings and the finer moral instincts of men. Here may be "emergence," but here, above all, the higher cannot be accounted for in the terms of the lower.

We turn to the opposite theory, that of intuition.

The moral sense cannot be derived from any simpler, or different elements. It is *sui generis*. We are confronted with the "categorical imperative," and our duty is to obey. Here is a final irreducible fact. This is a bald way of stating a very important and widely supported view. It obviously does full justice to the element of authority. But (*a*) it seems to fail on the side of history. Little as evolutionary ethics can explain the content of the moral reason, yet undoubtedly it has behind it a long process of development. The theories of that development at present before us may be inconsistent with one another, and it may be that none of them will win its way to final acceptance. But it can hardly be denied that they contain elements of truth. Men's apprehension of goodness has passed through many stages of change and growth. A complete account of the meaning of morality, while it must be much more than a mere theory of genesis, must make room for this fact. (*b*) It also fails to give any answer to the question: What does goodness really mean? Conscience commands and forbids certain things, but why does it command or forbid these particular things?

We can get more help from a more ancient theory than any of these. The old Greek view identified moral goodness with τὸ καλόν, the beautiful. It is true we cannot simply accept this identification, and hold that the æsthetic and the moral aspects of the world are one and the same, or that the latter is but a department of

the former. But the present writer believes that here, as so often elsewhere, the Greeks pointed the way towards a solution.

We said above that the æsthetic sense, like religious awe, is in the last resort unanalysable, although we may succeed in isolating certain elements in both. Beauty exists as a perception, answering to a certain aspect of Reality. In this respect we believe that it presents a close analogy to the moral sense. The latter carries with it an imperative, a sense of obligation, lacking in the former. But this must be distinguished, to begin with, from the recognition of goodness. That, too, must be acknowledged, we submit, to be an aspect of Reality, which, though we may say a good deal about its component elements, ultimately defies our efforts to analyse it into something different from itself. We feel what goodness is, and this feeling brings us into closer touch with it than any ethical theories.

Here, once more, our contention is that the view which attributes personality to the Supreme Reality does more justice to all the facts than the opposite view. Just as truth is the ideal of a perfectly coherent personal experience, and beauty is unintelligible except as an element in personality, so goodness is best explained as the perfect form of a personal activity, and if so, then its authoritativeness is explained. For it corresponds, as truth and beauty do not in the same sense, to that element of personality which we call will.

Once more, we point out what exactly this contention means. We are not saying that God is a person, in the sense that He is one of a class of personal beings, but that what we call personality may be attributed, in a transcendent sense, to the Reality, of which the universe is the manifestation in time and space. Admittedly the highest form of personal activity is that which we call goodness. And the supreme value which we attach to goodness receives at once a full and satisfying explanation if it correspond to the inmost character of the Reality whose nature we share.

Thus moral progress would be the highest stage in the evolutionary process. It would in all probability involve several different factors from those operative in biological evolution. We could not *a priori* infer that what is true of the latter must be true of the former. But that there should be progress on the whole, with periods of deterioration and stagnation, would appear even more probable in the sphere of ethics. If evolution on the whole represents the emergence of new aspects of the one Reality, this is what we might expect.

Consider the matter from our point of view. If God is personal, He is essentially self-communicative. But His actions here, as in other spheres, will be conditioned by the human response. There would thus be a close analogy with revelation in the sense already defined. A progressive apprehension of the nature of goodness, varying

degrees of attainment, the haunting sense in the best men of falling short of the ideal, the authority with which the ideal is in our minds invested, all these, and other familiar facts, fall into their proper place if goodness be an aspect of the one Reality, if it exists in perfection already in the realm which is eternal, unchanging. Evolutionary theories yield possible or probable descriptions of the development of the moral sense. Christian Theism gives an explanation, as final and adequate as our minds can receive, as to why there should be a moral sense at all, and of its ever-enlarging content: an explanation, too, of the sense of imperfection, and of the peculiar feelings of personal remorse and penitence. There is something, it has been often pointed out, of a personal tone about such experiences, as if we had become estranged from One Who is the true home of our spirits, which is absent entirely from the regret or annoyance which we feel when we have committed an error in judgment, even if our mistake involves disastrous consequences to ourselves or others. If, however, the error is attributed by us to our carelessness, or other moral, as distinct from intellectual, shortcoming, at once this peculiar personal feeling of remorse makes its appearance.

All these phenomena are intelligible if the moral ideal exists in a Mind, and the moral laws are the expression of a Will, with which our own minds and wills are connected at the very roots of their being. They are less intelligible if

they are simply the products of an evolutionary process, and have no source other and higher than the sanctions of social tradition. This is not to deny that the evolutionary account is true, but only that such an account gives the sole final and adequate explanation of the facts.

It would appear almost unnecessary to insist on the fact that we are not here guilty of making the moral law the expression of an arbitrary will. An act is not right because God wills it. He wills it because it is right. He could not conceivably have willed anything else. For its rightness is its correspondence with His nature, that is, with the ultimate Reality which is the background of the universe. The divine will is simply the divine nature in its activity. We may will that which is contrary to that which is best and highest in us, but that is only because our nature is not a completely integrated and harmonious whole. Our self is still in the making.

Our entire argument, in the last two chapters, has been directed to one point. We have tried to show, and, I think, have succeeded in showing, that the human values of beauty, truth, and goodness, whatever may have been the process by which they have come to be, receive their completest and most satisfying explanation if personality can be attributed to the supreme Reality of which the universe, including ourselves, is a partial expression.

From this it follows that that type of theology, or interpretation of the fact of the religious experi-

ence of mankind, is to be preferred, which has for its cardinal doctrine the personality of God. This application of the test of values was, it will be remembered, to be our touchstone in determining the claims of competing theologies to our acceptance. Christian Theism gives a more reasonable account of experience than Buddhism or other pantheistic views, or the more modern types of theology, which may perhaps be labelled "rationalistic," and of which Mr J. Huxley is so able and attractive an exponent.

Such a test, for reasons already given, would seem to be the best we can apply when our object is to answer the question as to how we shall decide amid the conflicting interpretations which are offered of that religious experience which is so early, widespread, and dominant a feature of human life.

But there is one other consideration. If, admittedly, the highest product of evolution, as far as we know, is the personal life of man, then the ultimate Reality, successive aspects of which are disclosed as we pass from one stage to another of the great procession of life, must at least include, however it may transcend, all that we have learnt to call personality. The Source cannot be itself on a lower level than the highest which it has so far produced.

Here we touch once more the new psychological theory of religion as a special case of projection. We saw, in Chapter II, that there were grave objections to regarding this as a sufficient account

of the origin of religion. That projection, the reading by man of himself, his wishes, aspirations, and ideals, into the unseen order, is a factor in the development of religion, is, we consider, more than probable. What seems to us most improbable, is that that order is itself no more than a result of such projection. What is quite irrational is the assertion that projection can only lead to conclusions that are false. In amazement we ask why? If man be part and parcel of the universe, if the life of the universe throb in and through him, why should his nature be no clue at all, or a profoundly misleading one, to the nature of the universe? If something of Reality be disclosed in inorganic nature, and more in the lowest forms of life, why can nothing of Reality be discerned in the spiritual nature of man? The attribution to Reality of that of which we are conscious as highest in ourselves, while we acknowledge that it is there infinitely transcended, is not merely an entirely rational procedure. It would appear to be the only method we possess of penetrating to the secret of the universe. An Absolute which is entirely destitute of anything corresponding to the higher human qualities, is a philosophical abstraction. Certainly, in this sense, the Absolute has nothing about it to command our reverence.

> "A loving worm within its clod
> Were diviner than a loveless God."

Fortunately, there seem no grounds for predicat-

ing existence of it, other than such existence as it possesses within the abstracting mind. In its place we are confronted with God—not "a" God—the one sole, sufficient and satisfying Object of our human adoration, love, and faith. In Him the quest of the restless intellect, the unfulfilled dreams of the artist and poet, the passionate aspiration after the moral ideal, and the deep-rooted capacity of worship find at last their goal.

CHAPTER V

HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The religious experience of mankind involves, like all other experience, a reality of some kind. That, I think, will be fairly generally admitted. It would also be largely, but not quite so generally, admitted, that the correlate of religious experience is nothing less than the supreme Reality of the universe. There agreement ends. The interpretation of that Reality is the task of theology, in the very wide and not etymologically correct sense in which we have used the term. Thus the view which we have been discussing, so persuasively set forth by Mr J. Huxley, but also, I believe, very much in the air at the present day, is entitled, under our definition, to be called a theology. Briefly this view is that the reality of the background of religion, though variously and imperfectly conceived in the many religions of mankind, is the sum of all the powers working in the universe, organised in the human mind as the idea of God. When this is fully realised, we shall then have a new and superior type of religion. It will be based upon the explicit recognition of the truth towards which its predecessors were imperfect approximations.

In spite, however, of the persuasiveness with which this view is urged, we cannot help feeling that the resultant religion will be lacking in some of the essential elements which we associate with the word. There will be, admittedly, no room for the prayer of petition. But also, and this is a more serious matter, there will be no room for prayer in that wider meaning in which it constitutes the heart of religion, the human communion with the divine. This includes penitence, thanksgiving, aspiration, adoration. All these actually, as the first two obviously, imply a personal relationship, personal on both sides. Religion will be evacuated of its central significance. Wonder will be left, and awe, and an ideal of life as a helping forward of the progressive tendencies already manifested. This is a modern version of " fellow-workers of God." But it lacks the definiteness, and no small measure of the inspiration, of the idea expressed in the older phrase.

Still, there is no worse argument than to condemn a view because of its consequences, real or supposed. The contention we have sought to establish is this: that the type of theology is to be preferred, which attributes personality to the supreme Reality. Our method has been to apply the test of human values to the two main types of theology, that which affirms, and that which denies, personality in the supreme Reality. The result of that test has been in favour of the former. And this result is greatly strengthened by what appears to be the sheer impossibility of attributing

a higher order of existence to our part of the universe than to the Reality of which that universe is an expression.

This leaves us with that type which is founded upon personality in God, and which finds in personality the clue to " the riddle of the universe." This description holds good in an especial degree of the highest member of the family which can be classed under the general type, Christian Theism. The modern man of the Western world is not attracted at all by polytheism, and not greatly by Judaism or Islam. We have spoken already of the central characteristic of Christian Theism, the doctrine of the Trinity, and shall now approach the subject from a different angle.

We no longer speak of *the* religion of revelation. We regard all the religions of mankind as being products of revelation, in the sense of the self-communication to human minds of the living God. This process of communication is throughout conditioned by the receptivity of those minds. Thus religions are not to be contrasted as true or false, but as varying in degrees of perfection or imperfection. There are in all of them two constant elements, divine and human, the action of God and the response of man. The imperfection of the latter is due, as noticed before, to different degrees of (*a*) cultural, and (*b*) ethical progress. Looking at the matter from the human standpoint, the primitive response has been the feeling or emotion aroused by the vague perception of " the holy." This, as the proper root of religion, must be dis-

tinguished from the sense of the power or powers outside man operating in the universe. From this one root spring all the various religions of mankind.

There is no improbability, but rather the reverse, in conceiving of religion as exhibiting an evolutionary process. There is the earliest beginning, a response to the (divine) environment, not a merely passive environment, but, as is the case with the biological environment, an active factor in development. This response becomes more complicated and more effective, and new and higher structures make their appearance. Throughout, however, we must beware of the fallacy of supposing that all that is true of biological must also be true of religious evolution. This warning is needed in other spheres, as that of sociology. The concept of evolution is a good servant but a dangerous master.

If this view is the true one, then, as all life is one, so all religion is one. There is profound truth in Dean Inge's remark that Christianity is not one of many religions but religion itself. As in man various elements of the animate world, both bodily and mental, are gathered into a unity which both includes and transcends them, so Christianity includes the truths of other religions in a unity which at the same time transcends them. Here we return to our starting-point in the first chapter, the doctrine of the Logos. There, we considered that doctrine as throwing light upon the inherent rationality of the universe.

It is a subordinate but most important department of this, that it illuminates the unity which runs through the religious history of mankind. This grand idea had already been grasped by some minds in the second century, as by Justin Martyr, but we now have a clearer vision of its scope and implications. The Logos is the self-communication of God to man. Hence the religion of the Incarnate Logos is the final religion, religion itself, standing in close organic connexion to all others. Here we have the ultimate, whatever may be the proximate, explanation of the points of likeness in widely separated areas, as in varied levels of culture, which surprise the student of comparative religion.

There is a line of development from the amœba to man, with countless divergent branches. At this point we need the warning given above as to the indiscriminate application of biological categories. But at least we can trace a line which runs up through the old Hebrew religion to Christianity. At certain stages in biological evolution we meet with what Professor Lloyd Morgan has taught us to call " emergent " forms, that is, forms which cannot be explained in terms of what has preceded them. Is it fanciful, is it pressing the dangerous argument from analogy too far, to see in the rise of the ethical monotheism of the great Hebrew prophets out of the earlier nature-worship (not dissociated from the worship of Yahweh) an instance of emergence? This is not to say that it was a step abrupt, dis-

continuous, having no seed-elements in the past. It is, however, the assertion that it cannot be wholly explained as a simple rearrangement or combination of elements in the preceding stage. This is the essence of the theory of emergents. And once more, the use of such an analogy does not imply, in religious or biological evolution, the exclusion of divine action. To some of us this appears to be the best working hypothesis, in the one case as in the other. Further, if both the rationality of the universe and the course of religious development find their explanation, which is in nowise opposed to their scientific description, in the doctrine of the Logos, such an analogy is only what one would expect to find. The works of the great Artist naturally exhibit traces of the same style. And in the prophetic stage itself, we are prepared to find signs of development. But, looking at it as a whole, prophetism does represent an enormous, almost revolutionary, advance.

It is this which constitutes the Old Testament a veritable monument of human progress. We would not wish any of the record of the more primitive ages omitted. For its value does not depend entirely on the lofty moral and spiritual teaching which it contains, but almost as much on its exhibition of a progressive advance. It is this which was altogether lost when all its parts were regarded as literally true, as "verbally inspired." While, once more, there are dangers lurking in its indiscriminate application, we owe

more than we can say to the concept of evolution. Here, again, is another debt we owe to it. If towards the close of the Jewish period we come across elements difficult to fit in with a scheme of steady and successive development, we are not disconcerted. We are content to recognise, here as in the sphere of animate nature generally, evidence, not of advance all along the line, but of "progress on the whole." The New Testament bears witness that the gains of the prophetic period were by no means lost.

But prophetism, great as it was, does not represent the final stage. It was itself a preparation for the next. What were its permanent gains? In enumerating some of these, we must bear in mind that they have become integral parts of the spiritual heritage of mankind, and that this very fact makes it extraordinarily difficult for us to realise how revolutionary they were at their first inception. There was, first of all, the conviction of the unity of God. The idea that, as Yahweh was God of the Hebrews, so was Moloch of Ammon, and Chemosh of Moab, receives its death-blow. As a consequence of this, though not a consequence immediately apprehended, or even universally acknowledged, He is God of all the nations of the earth, and they, not less than Israel, are the objects of His providential care and governance. Here is a saying of one of the earliest of the prophets:

"Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor and

the Syrians from Kir?" (Amos ix. 7). But, above all, there is the constant and most consistent characteristic of the prophetic message, that the favour of God is not secured by ritual acts or by sacrifice, but by ethical conformity to His character. He is righteous, and only by righteousness can man please Him. He is merciful, and only by mercy, not by sacrifice, is the way of the human approach to the divine. Isaiah i. 11–20 is the *locus classicus* in respect of the all-importance of the ethical, and the insignificance of the cult element. But the passage is representative.

"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a humble and contrite spirit" (Isa. lvii. 15).

"I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings" (Hosea vi. 6).

Is this stage, to dwell on it for a moment in passing, simply a "natural development" of human thought, and without significance as to the ultimate nature of the Reality behind and in the universe? The writer finds it more than difficult to think this. As well might we say that the great theories of natural science have no bearing on real existence, but only have their being in the minds of those who construct them. I anticipate here the obvious objection, that the latter can at least be tested by observation and experiment. That is undoubtedly the way of verifying assertions as to the physical universe. We claim that the spiritual consciousness (for

want of a better title) supplies the appropriate means of verifying statements as to the Reality which both includes and transcends the physical. Nor is any psychological reconstruction of the prophetic consciousness at all relevant to this main issue. Once again, description is not explanation. A knowledge of digestive processes is not digestion. We may add, without stressing the point, that the physiological process is fairly well known, while some of the newer psychological theories are not built on a rock.

This is by way of parenthesis. But the point is by no means unimportant. The conviction is gaining ground that here is the true line of what is miscalled apologetic. The witness to spiritual truth is in man, not in ancient texts or philosophical arguments. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." There is an antecedent likelihood that each stage or kind of truth should have its own special means of verification.

The higher spiritual aspects of the Old Testament are not limited to the actual writings of the prophets. The Psalms, some of them, are unsurpassable as translations of the lofty ideas of prophetism into the language of devotion, that is, of personal approach to God. Here again, we find those differences of level which we expect, and find, everywhere. Our whole view of the vast stretch of religious phenomena enables us to recognise some degree of kinship in ethnic religions, as in certain Babylonian hymns. It would be rather an argument against its divine

origin if the religion of the Old Testament were an absolutely isolated phenomenon. It is not, however, going too far to claim that, considered as a whole, the Old Testament is unique, as in its representation of religious evolution, so in its highest teaching on the nature of the divine and on human relationship to the divine.

It is not possible, in these days, to proceed at once from the Old to the New Testament, from the prophets and psalmists to Christ. It is true we cannot trace a steady, uniform progress, but this we have no right to demand. Progress, however, there is in two directions. On the view taken here it is not possible to deny a real measure of revelation in the case of the Wisdom literature and the Apocalyptic writers. In the former, we can trace the growth of the idea of the divine immanence in the world—the Wisdom that "reacheth from one end to another: mightily and sweetly doth she order all things." But this is no merely metaphysical theory of the universe, for it is warmed by the glow of a lofty moral enthusiasm: "She (that is, Wisdom) is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness. And being but one, she can do all things; and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new; and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God, and prophets. . . . Vice shall not prevail over Wisdom."

Turning to Apocalyptic, we find many things utterly repugnant to our ways of thinking. I

can imagine nothing more tedious than having to wade through these books. But, stripped of all that is, so to speak, accidental, and the product of special circumstances in Jewish history, it is not possible to overlook the nobility of the idea which runs through them all, breaking the crust of a narrow nationalism, the idea of the ultimate victory of order and righteousness. God, the righteous God of the prophets, will finally "come into His own." The vision of the new "Jerusalem built in England's green and pleasant land," is one which, in so different an age and under such widely different conditions, reflects the mind of Jewish Apocalyptic at its best. But the new Jerusalem of the Apocalyptic writers is built by no man, but comes down out of heaven from God.

In a few lines we have attempted to sum up a long and important period of religious thought, extending for some three centuries. Its value is not only great on its own account, but because, in both its developments, it has left ineffaceable marks on the New Testament. The Wisdom literature supplied some of the categories under which three of the writers, St Paul, St John, and the unnamed author of Hebrews, attempted to interpret the Person of Christ. The Apocalyptic school furnished imagery and ideas which enter largely into His recorded teaching, and moulded the minds of His earliest interpreters.

The central fact of Christian experience, and so of Christian theology, is the teaching and life

of Jesus Christ. Here, undoubtedly, we are led back to the main line of development, the prophetic. For, under one aspect, His teaching represents a further stage, including the results of the past, and at the same time marking a very great advance. Perhaps this advance is best summed up in the phrase—the Fatherhood of God. The name, as is well known, was not new. What is distinctive is (*a*) the unique and solitary predominance of this conception of the Divine Being. It has been said that what was novel was not that Christ called God Father, but that He never called Him anything else; and (*b*) the wealth of content and meaning poured into the word.

In the long history of religion, the individual comes here, at last, fully into his own. Truly Jeremiah and Ezekiel of old had led the revolt against the group theory of religion, and thus broken with an immemorial past. But now the spiritual life is exhibited as intercourse between God and the individual soul, Fatherly love on the one side, the response of filial love on the other.

Along with this, and as a consequence of this, the hard, legalistic view of the divine-human relationship, current in Christ's time in a most important and respected section of religious thought and tradition, is seen at once to disappear. Individuality, in this context at least, means freedom. St Paul, looking back on the past, might well speak of "the freedom with which Christ made you free." This step was nothing short of revolutionary. Presently, when

the new religion had emerged into the wider Græco-Roman world, it was seen to involve another kind of freedom, from those terrors of the unseen world which Mr Bevan has so graphically depicted in his *Hellenism and Christianity*. Christians were no longer men "enslaved under the elements (elementary forces) of the world."

The new idea included all that was of abiding value in the ancient revelation. It is very easy to see that power, wisdom, righteousness, and, to a degree undreamt of before, love, are all included in the concept of the perfect Father.

Here, too, is no enforced amalgamation of religion and morality, nor yet a casual connexion between them. Even more than in the prophetic religion, morality is made to flow from that conception of God which is the heart of the Christian religion. Corresponding with the new conception of God, there is a new type of morality. There is no longer the keeping of set commandments, but the liberation of a new source of moral energy in men who are conscious in themselves of divine sonship, and recognise that sonship in others. Consider, as an example, the impressive new reading of the commandments in the Sermon on the Mount. Far above all, is the life and character of Christ Himself as type and ideal of the new kind of human life. Far and wide beyond the confines of professed discipleship has spread the influence, original and creative, of the new moral impulse thus generated. There is, after all, a meaning in the phrase "Christian

civilisation," even if the original impulse has been obscured in the course of its development, and even if occasionally it disowns its source. No amount of failure in individuals, or groups of individuals, even when spread over large tracts of time, is relevant in this connexion. The mere recognition of failure points at the same time to the recognition of, and homage to the ideal. And from time to time men have recurred, and do recur to that ideal, and thence draw fresh supplies of moral energy.

The unique stress in the teaching of Christ, on the value and significance of the individual, has had the most important results in the world of thought, as well as in that of morality. It is not too much to say that modern philosophy, on its most characteristic side, the development of the concept of personality, is the child of Christianity.

Individuality can degenerate into selfishness in its varied forms. In the Christian religion this danger is avoided by an equal stress on the idea of the community. Fatherhood, sonship, have their sphere only within the family. Here is the return to a very ancient idea, but now the family has become world-wide, even as the Divine Fatherhood is, in essence and principle, universal. Most characteristic of the teaching of Christ is His exaltation of the law of service to the point of complete sacrifice of self. This sublime paradox is the very heart of that which is *par excellence* the religion of individuality. It is, just as truly,

the religion of the community, or church, or divine family. Here, at last, is the practical resolution of the ancient problem of the one and the many: the resolution too, if only we have eyes to see, of the economic problems of every age. Only in service, only in self-surrender, which is the practical outcome of his realised sonship to God, can the individual enter into the full possession of his own life. He that willeth to save his life shall lose it: he that willeth to lose it, in the service of Christ in his fellow-men, shall find it unto life eternal.

And the lesson was driven home by an appeal which could not be gainsaid: "I am among you as one that serveth."

The nearest approach to Christian ethics is to be found in Buddhism. But there, as we have already noticed in a preceding chapter, the aim is not the attainment of a higher life, the winning of a truer and wider self in fellowship with God and man, but the extinction of conscious life as such. Desire is not to be purified, sublimated into unselfish love, but is regarded as the enemy, to be got rid of at the end of a long and painful travail. And the aim is a purely personal, that is, selfish one.

The charge of selfishness has in fact been brought against Christianity, but unjustly. For the aim which is set before the Christian disciple is not any state of enjoyment, but of likeness to God, Who is believed in as Himself Love and the source of love, and, as such, expending Him-

self in the service of His creatures. "Ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Further, this perfection is such that, by its very nature, it is incapable of being enjoyed as a solitary, individual possession, but is only to be realised in the divine-human fellowship. "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and these things we write unto you, that your joy may be fulfilled." The joy of the Christian heaven is the joy of God Himself, that of unselfish giving. It follows that to aim at "heaven" as if it were a state of happiness valued for its own sake, still more if it is to be regarded as a prize for being good, other than goodness itself, is to misunderstand the meaning of the word.

Such then is the ethical teaching of Christ, based upon what is to all intents and purposes a new theology, a view of the nature of God which included all of permanent value in the past stages, but also added new elements by which the old were transformed and blended along with them into a higher synthesis. Here at last is the solution of the ancient problem of the relation of religion and morality. For morality is raised into likeness to God, Who is believed in and adored as the supreme ethical Ideal; while the effort to attain this end is regarded as the actual presence and life and working of God within the soul of man.

Prayer, therefore, ceases to be a petition for personal goods apart from God, and becomes the

conscious effort to raise the human will into more complete conformity with the Divine Will, as perfect righteousness and perfect love, and therefore as including the highest good of all creatures. In the model of Christian prayer the Name, or revealed character of God, His Kingdom, His Will, are put first, and no material or spiritual blessings are asked for the individual who prays but for the " beloved community " of which he is a member, and for himself as a member of that one great family of God.

This, however, is one aspect only of the significance of Jesus Christ. He appears indeed as inaugurating a new theology and a new ethic, " new " in the sense defined.

But also it is impossible, in reading the Gospels, to overlook the fact that here we have no carefully formulated and balanced statement of an ethico-theological system, but the impression and influence of a personality. Nothing can be more unlike the methods of other teachers. What Christ was, in an unspeakably greater degree than what He actually said, was the creative force of the new ideal. But still more than that. His disciples believed that their Master had died, had risen again from the dead, had manifested Himself to " chosen witnesses," had withdrawn Himself from their sight by the symbolic act of the Ascension, and had, according to His promise, returned to them in the presence and power of the Spirit, and was from henceforth active and working in the community and in the individuals who made

up the community. That, at least, was their experience. Thus the story of the Gospels was, and is being, repeated. Christians believe their inner life to be inspired and animated by the actual presence of their unseen Lord, and not merely by His recorded teaching.

That is the impression produced on our minds as in the Acts and the Epistles we study the life of the Apostolic Church. Here is something entirely different from a "school" of followers of a departed philosopher or prophet. The Church lives by the life of Christ. It is the life which gives its coherence and its dynamic force to the new society, and for the individual, his highest spiritual experience is summed up in: "It is no more I that live, but Christ liveth in me." Jesus still continues "both to do and to teach" in and through His Church. Even in a pre-biological age, the only language possible to describe this experience was the language of biology. "Now ye are the Body of Christ, and each one of you, individually, members thereof." The one life holds together and animates the organism, and each part shares in, and functions by, that one life. The analogy is complete, as far as any analogy can be. This, through the succeeding period, is the typical Christian view and the typical Christian experience.

Ample room is left for progress. For the revelation of Christ is regarded as complete only in principle. "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." As He Himself is

recorded to have said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." The infinite riches of that revelation are being disclosed from age to age, as human experience in general gains in depth and breadth and richness, as more and more the significance of the universe is being slowly realised. The living Lord through the Spirit is now saying, and will continue to say, things which would have been unintelligible to that first circle of Jewish disciples.

Such, in summary, is the character of Christian experience. Christian theology, like all other theologies, is the attempt to interpret that experience.

As we noticed before, the strength and the weakness of the Christian religion is that it is rooted, and claims to be rooted, in history. If, for example, the Resurrection is not a fact, then the whole thing falls to the ground. This particular instance is indeed the critical point. So it was felt to be from the very first. The two keynotes of the earliest Christian apologetic, seen in the early chapters of the Acts, are (1) the continuity of the new religion with the past (the appeal to the Old Testament); and (2) the Resurrection, as evidenced by the appearances of the Risen Christ to the Apostles. "Of the men therefore which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day that He was received up from us, of these must one become a witness

with us of His Resurrection" (Acts i. 21, 22).

The point which concerns us here is that the whole Christian movement began with and depended upon the conviction that the Lord had in fact risen. Christian experience is an illusion if this central conviction be untrue.

The nature of the Resurrection appearances and of the Risen Body of the Lord are secondary problems. The one thing which matters is this: Were, and are, Christians right in believing that Jesus Christ did in truth manifest Himself to chosen witnesses after His Crucifixion, and that He is alive now in the plenitude of personal energy?

There are two lines of evidence:

1. The record of the New Testament.

The narratives in the Gospels produce the impression of being genuine accounts of actual experiences. The most convincing proof of this is the impossibility of harmonising them. They read like the narratives of unsophisticated people suddenly confronted by experiences for which they were totally unprepared. No subsequent editor has tried to piece them together into an ordered and connected whole. Some details less trustworthy than the rest may have crept in during the process of oral transmission. This seems likely to have happened in the case of some points in the local Jerusalem tradition preserved in St Matthew's Gospel. Even here, there has been

no attempt at "writing up" a narrative which certainly "smacks of the soil." The total effect of these undoubtedly independent testimonies is that here we have first-hand accounts of something which the witnesses actually saw and which convinced them, in some cases against a certain amount of mental resistance, that Christ had veritably risen. We should not, in any other matter, dream of rejecting the evidence as to the main fact borne by witnesses clearly desirous of telling the truth, because of their discrepancies as to details. Such discrepancies we should expect, if we know anything of the working of human minds, and at any rate their existence would convince us of the absence of previous collusion among the witnesses themselves. Various attempts, some more plausible than the rest, some even wildly improbable, have been made to explain away this united testimony. But it is safe to say that not one of these attempts would ever have been made, if such an occurrence as the Resurrection had not conflicted with their authors' *a priori* ideas of what was conceivable in a universe such as ours.

The narratives agree in describing something entirely different from a mere resuscitation from the grave. On any view, the phenomena related are of extraordinary interest. What is really presented is a picture of a genuinely human life, continuous with its past, but at the same time exhibiting freedom from some of the laws of our terrestrial existence, and the operation of other laws which cannot be formulated. Now, if our

humanity, in the case of our Lord, had actually passed through death into another plane of existence, functioning there in a new way, this combination is exactly what we should expect. But who among the first disciples could have entertained or even understood such an idea? The idea is indeed central to the theology of the Resurrection. But evén the Apostles had not formulated a theology and none of them even tried to frame a metaphysical theory. These first witnesses were neither philosophers nor theologians. The fact that what they record furnishes the groundwork of a very coherent Christian philosophy, while nothing could have been more remote from their minds, must be allowed considerable weight when we are trying to judge of the truth of that record.

The conviction that the Lord had indeed risen had tremendous moral results in the first disciples. We cannot for a moment doubt the exceedingly candid and ingenuous records of the faint-heartedness and cowardice of the Apostles suddenly transformed into boldness of speech and action and readiness to suffer in the cause of the Master whom one had denied and all had forsaken. Such a moral dynamic cannot be the consequence of a belief founded on uncertain grounds. The author of the Acts tells us that Christ, during the forty days between His Resurrection and final withdrawal, made it His chief object to fix firmly this belief in the minds of those men who were to found the Church. " To whom He showed Him-

self alive after His passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days." Then, at the close of this period, follows the command to be His "witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The whole thing hangs together. It is not straining the evidence too much to say that the New Testament presents us with a picture which is intelligible, coherent, and in accord with the psychological probabilities, on the assumption that the conviction of the first missionaries of Christianity that Christ had risen from the dead was one founded on fact. On the opposite assumption, this harmony disappears and the whole story of primitive Christianity is reduced to an unintelligible chaos. If we reject the "miracle" of the Resurrection we have to invent another "miracle" to serve as some sort of explanation of the actual facts.

An outstanding witness is St Paul. This is well-worn ground, but the two chief features of his very remarkable testimony may be briefly noticed.

(*a*) His is the earliest literary evidence. The first Epistle to the Corinthians dates from about A.D. 55, and thus is some years previous to the actual compilation of the earliest of our Gospels in its present form. This far from exhausts its value. The list of appearances of the Risen Lord in chapter xv. 5–8 carries us right back to "the living voice" of the primitive Christian

community in Jerusalem, as shown by the use of the Aramaic Kephas for the more familiar name of Peter. Some critics use the omissions of this list as an argument against the historicity of some of the evangelic narratives, *e.g.* there is no mention of the appearance to St Mary Magdalene. This does not seem a very intelligent objection, unless we could be convinced that the writer had the express intention of recording every appearance during the period of the forty days, or that such completeness was essential to his argument, or even that his knowledge extended so far. At least we have a record to all seeming independent of the literary sources of our Gospels. Further, it is impossible to exaggerate the value, in this context, of the appeal to the manifestations to "over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until the present, but some are fallen asleep." The whole account of "that which I received" is manifestly rooted in the earliest Christian testimony, that of the actual "eye-witnesses of the Word."

(*b*) Further, the Apostle did not begin to be convinced of the Resurrection in A.D. 55. Nor was he dependent on his fortnight's intercourse with Peter (Gal. i. 18), some twenty years previously, whence he very probably derived the list of appearances we have just considered. He claims himself to have "seen Jesus our Lord," and places this "seeing" as the final member of the list in question: "Last of all, as to one born out

of due time, He appeared to me also." That an event did take place, at a definite time and in a definite place, which exercised the most remarkable psychological effects attributable to any event in history, which completely changed the whole current of St Paul's thought and life, which launched him upon a new and entirely unpredictable career, is as certain as any statement about the past can be. Attempts have been made constantly to minimise the value of this experience of the Apostle, not of course as the decisive and controlling factor in his spiritual life, but as evidence for the objective fact of the Resurrection. Those which deserve consideration proceed on one or both of the following lines. It is pointed out that St Paul was, to use modern psychological parlance, suffering from a "Christian complex." The teaching and the death of Stephen, the witness of other sufferers for their faith, the characters, it may well be, of Christians whom he knew, combined with his own deep-seated dissatisfaction with the results of his training under the Law, and his interior spiritual struggle as revealed in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, to produce a serious doubt in his mind as to whether these followers of a crucified and risen Messiah might not, after all, be in the right. His strenuous attempts to annihilate the new sect, his ferocity as a persecutor, are but evidences of his endeavours to suppress this doubt, to drive down the new and unwelcome complex into the

region of the unconscious. This theory explains everything except the very point to be explained, namely, the nature of the occurrence which "resolved the complex." What was it which overcame the intense reluctance to acknowledge as Messiah One who had died the "accursed" death? Galatians iii. 13 has to be taken into account as a cause of his persecuting fervour, as well as the imagined "complex."

The reconstruction of St Paul's mental state preceding his conversion is guesswork, although it does not lack plausibility. There is no reason to doubt that the teaching and death of St Stephen had a powerful effect on his mind. For the first martyr died for his advocacy of the truth for which St Paul spent his life, the universality of the new religion. He was the first exponent of a liberal presentment of Christianity for which he and the Apostle both suffered at the hands of the Jews. That there was some kind of conflict in the mind of the latter is evidenced by the words: "It is hard for thee to kick against the goads," though these occur only in one of the three accounts of the conversion (Acts xxvi. 14, not in Acts ix. 5 in any Greek MS.). There is no reason at all to think that the words were a product of imagination or projection. When all has been said, the critical event which determined St Paul's career is still left on our hands for explanation. So we come to the second line of psychological attack. It is said that St Paul was a man naturally inclined to the "seeing of visions," and that the desert,

the physical surroundings, were calculated to produce visions as in the case of others. This is all rather precarious. What ground is there for the former assertion, except 2 Corinthians xii. 2–5? This passage shows that the Apostle, like so many of the Christian saints, was by no means inclined to lay much stress on such experiences, and quite certainly did not build his theology upon them. The experience of "Christ in him," which he claims for all normal Christians, is as far removed from the hallucinations of a sick dreamer as anything can be. We do know, in fact, a great deal about the mental processes of St Paul. No reader of the Epistles can fail to be impressed by the essential sanity of the man, whether as administrator or theologian. The experiences described in 2 Corinthians, again, stand on a different footing, quite obviously, from that which occurred at the critical moment of the conversion.

The explanation which best fits in with all the facts of the case is that which the Apostle himself gave, that there and then was made to him a genuine manifestation of the Risen Christ. Like all historical events, this is incapable of demonstrative proof. That does not mean that, again like other events of history, it is incapable of such degree of proof as can satisfy a reasonable mind. We require three things in such cases: (*a*) testimony at first hand which is as free from doubt as the matter admits: (*b*) that the event in question has had consequences in subsequent

history which we can trace: (*c*) that it fits the whole situation to which it belongs, that it has its place in a coherent scheme. There are few historical events which so well satisfy these tests as the revelation made to St Paul. It is not going too far to say that no one would ever have dreamt of doubting it, or indeed, in general, the fact of the Resurrection, if the question of the "supernatural" were not involved.

Apart from this, it is fair to assert that there is as much reason for believing the Resurrection as there is for believing in the occurrence of any past event. We have not dealt with all the testimony, *e.g.* the finding of the empty tomb. The conflicting theories of various modern writers on this last point can be left to dispose of themselves. Nor is it incumbent on us to explain the nature of the appearances. It is quite sufficient to have found substantial grounds for the belief of the earliest Christians, that their Lord was alive in the plenitude of all His personal activity, and manifested this fact to them in the world of sense and perception.

2. But there is a different kind of testimony to the fact of the Resurrection from that of past witnesses. This is the impressive witness of the present existence of the Christian society. There can be no sort of doubt that this is the most insoluble riddle of all history, if that society be not founded on an actual event, but only on a mistaken idea that that event occurred. All

probabilities were against its continuance. Not merely has persecution to be taken into account, but, which is even more serious, the grave divisions among Christians and their unfaithfulness to the Christian ideal. Nor is it possible to exaggerate the evidential value of Sunday. Here is a sacred observance, unique in its kind, having for its one *raison d'être* the commemoration of our Lord's Resurrection; which, if our only record is to be trusted, goes back to the very time of the alleged event, and which at first established itself side by side with, and finally ousted another sacred day of immemorial antiquity and a high degree of sanctity. Somewhat similar considerations apply to the Eucharist, which involves the belief in the Christ living through death. More than all this, the Christian Church has exhibited, and still exhibits, a great spiritual vitality simply as witness and vehicle of the activity of the Risen Christ among men. It is at any rate this vitality which has enabled it to survive, in face of all accumulated improbabilities against such survival, and to exhibit a most extraordinary influence in raising and refining human character, all through the ages of its existence.

There is no assignable limit to the number of theories which may be devised to explain this many-sided phenomenon. But the simple account which the Church has to offer of itself, that it is the organism through which the Risen Christ still lives and works among men, and that no measure of human failure has ever been able entirely to

destroy the life which it enshrines and of which it is the instrument, because that life is in its nature divine, is the only account which does really "explain." For it alone enables us to see the whole vast field as one coherent and intelligible whole. The Christian Church is the present witness to the reality of the Resurrection. "*Si monumentum requiras, circumspice.*"

It has been necessary to deal with this particular point at some length. Though full justice has not been done to either side, we have at least exhibited the belief in the Resurrection as a reasonable one. The reason for this digression, if it can be called one, is simply this: the rise of a Christian theology as interpretative of the specific Christian experiences is wholly inexplicable, as indeed the original experience is inexplicable, apart from this belief. As our contention is that this theology is as near an approach to absolute truth as we can attain, it was requisite to show the grounds for holding that this event did actually occur. The manner of it is not unimportant, but irrelevant for our present purpose. But it is quite certain that, apart from the Resurrection, discussion of Christian experience or theology has merely an antiquarian interest. Christianity has to take all the risks of being an historical religion. Else it could never be, what it has always been, the religion of the common man.

Christian theology is, like all other theologies, an attempt to interpret the relevant experience. From the nature of the case, this attempt is

essentially that of finding an answer to the question: "Who is Christ?"

Now, it is not possible here to enter upon a discussion of the innumerable questions which arise out of New Testament and allied studies. Fortunately it is possible to state the critical point briefly.

(*a*) There is no doubt that the general consensus of early Christian opinion placed Him in a different category from that of the prophets. He was not merely a highly inspired teacher. No disciple was prepared to say of Him that He merely marked an advance on Isaiah, or John the Baptist.

(*b*) They agreed that He was the Messiah. The earliest Christian apologetic was centred in showing that the Messianic claims were not overthrown by the Crucifixion, because God Himself had intervened, and had shown Him to be "both Christ and Lord" by raising Him from the dead. It is of peculiar interest to notice that this point, made in the speeches in the early chapters of the Acts, does not do justice to the lofty teaching of Jesus Himself as recorded in the Gospels. There He is the Christ not in spite of, but by reason of, His suffering. He deliberately chooses the title of "Son of Man," invested with all its Apocalyptic glories, in the passages, which there is no reasonable ground for doubting, in which He foretells His coming humiliation and death. There was indeed a wide gulf between the Jewish Christ and the kind of Christ He claimed to be. Here is the perfectly natural

explanation of His rejection, as also of the evidence of reserve in the Gospels. In His mind, the Christ was One Who should suffer for His people. He, and He alone, combined the two ideas of the Son of Man and the Suffering Servant of the second Isaiah. Unless we keep this thought firmly in mind, the whole of the Gospel history falls into confusion. With it, the entire picture becomes luminously clear.

But, at least, the earliest Christian conception of the Master was in terms of Messiahship, and of Messiahship vindicated by the Resurrection. It is quite clear that in the minds of the earliest Christians the term Messiah was associated with the Apocalyptic idea: "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began" (Acts iii. 21). To enter into the minds of these men, it is necessary to have some acquaintance with the type of thought represented by the Apocalyptic literature alluded to in the earlier part of this chapter. It is in fact open to doubt whether this literature has not coloured the report of some of our Lord's own sayings in the Gospels. A fuller consideration of this subject would lead us too far from our immediate purpose. It is more to the point to notice that this is far from being a full or fair account of the matter. What really occupies the most prominent place in the picture of the early Church is the existence of the "beloved community" itself and

its felt dependence upon the Spirit outpoured by the Ascended Christ. The first Christians were conscious of the possession of a new life, the bond of union which knit them into a brotherhood, and the source of a hitherto undreamt-of moral enthusiasm. This new life they identified with the Spirit promised by the Master. To exclude Pentecost and to devote attention solely to Apocalyptic is thoroughly unhistorical. As the Christ, He was not only to come again. Upon Him, in accordance with ancient prophecy, the Spirit had descended in all His fullness, and now that He had passed out of sight, He was fulfilling His mission to " baptise with the Holy Spirit." This constituted the new spiritual experience. As yet, the language in which it could be fully expressed had not yet been invented. But, speaking in the terms of later theology, we may say that here is Trinitarianism in its earliest germ.

(*c*) What are we to say of such titles as " Lord," or " Son of God," in which they endeavoured to describe what their Master meant to them? I would refer here to the most admirable discussion in the Bishop of Gloucester's *Jesus Christ in Faith and History*, Lecture VII. Our difficulty is the various meanings which may attach to both of these. For example, " Lord " may be (i) a mere title of respect, like our " sir ": (ii) a term redolent of divinity and mystery religion, as in " the Lord Serapis ": (iii) the Septuagint rendering of the sacred name of Jehovah. " Son of God " represents the highest ideal of the ancient Hebrew

king, *a fortiori* of the Messiah. But it is receptive of a higher meaning, as in St Paul and St John.

The culmination of one line of Christian thought is represented by Hebrews i. 1–3: "The effulgence of His glory and the image of His substance."

But the all-important thing is that, through these and like expressions, one thought was struggling to emerge. This thought is already present, in an inchoate form, at the earliest stages. In three writers, St Paul, St John, and the author of Hebrews, it receives much more adequate expression, naturally, in form and language, moulded by the age. But even in probably the earliest book of the New Testament it is already implicit in an actual prayer to Jesus: "Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you" (1 Thess. iii. 11). Even if we had not the prayer of St Stephen (Acts vii. 59), it would be ridiculous to ascribe this to Pauline development. St Paul was not a *persona grata* to all the members of the Jerusalem community, but there is no trace of controversy between him and them on the subject of the Lord's Person. The thought is that in the historical Jesus of Nazareth the One God has disclosed fully to men His nature and character and very life. At the close of the Apostolic age, it is at last clearly set forth in express words: "God hath no man ever seen: the only-begotten God (so the earliest text) He Who is in the bosom of the Father, He revealed Him" (John i. 18).

No doubt it is a bold attempt to deal in a few

paragraphs with volumes, or rather libraries, of New Testament theology. Yet the whole course of the earliest Christian development becomes clear, consistent with itself, exhibiting the nature of a living process, if it is regarded in this light, namely, of one master thought striving to be articulate, and to find a fitting expression. It ought to be needless to say that the idea of deification is ruled out by the monotheistic nature of Jewish theology, whether in the primitive community or in St Paul or St John.

I have not considered questions of literary criticism. In the New Testament we have the earliest records of Christianity, and problems of authorship are relatively unimportant,and for our purpose entirely irrelevant.

Nor have I considered it necessary to examine the two passages where St Paul possibly calls Jesus " God " outright (Acts xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5). The case does not rest on the interpretation of a few texts, but upon an attitude of mind and spirit exhibited under varied conditions and in most diverse personalities. We are not at this moment arguing whether this central thought, of the complete revelation of God in an historical Person, does or does not correspond with reality. The view I have tried to set out renders possible the intelligent reading of the New Testament as a whole. Nothing else can so satisfy all the conditions. It links up the confession of St Peter, the primitive Christology of his speeches in the Acts, with the advanced doctrine of Colossians and

Ephesians, Hebrews, and St John. Just as we trace in the Gospel the gradual teaching and preparation of the Apostles by the Lord in person, so a like development is apparent in the early Church under the teaching of His Spirit.

What are we left with in the end, as the result of this process? The faith in the One God remains unaltered and unshaken. Side by side with this, there is the belief in Jesus as not merely the Ascended Head of the Church, the Lord Who claims the absolute allegiance of all disciples, but as having a cosmic significance, as Creator and Sustainer of life and the source of unity of all that is, and in the Holy Spirit as the divine indwelling which constitutes the Church, and the author of all spiritual gifts in individual Christians.

No need appears to have been felt for the reconciliation of these elements. Compare, for example, the frankly Trinitarian tone of such passages as Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; 1 Peter i. 2.

Here we have experience, and the first stage of theological interpretation, which as yet is little more than an attempt to express that experience in words. Later on will come the attempt at a unified and logical expression, a reconciliation and combination of these various elements into a coherent whole. Here we shall have theology at a second remove, as it were, from experience.

Our next task will be to try to answer the questions: Can this development be justified at the bar of reason? How does it fit in with our modern conceptions of the universe?

CHAPTER VI

A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

WHAT we know as Christian theology is, from one point of view, the working out of the implications of the various strands of thought contained in the New Testament. But—a point sometimes overlooked by learned historians of theology—it is never divorced from experience. It is not merely the interpretation of the original experience of the first Christians, but of the accumulated experience of the Church, the living community, and that of the normal Christian man, as a member of that community. This underlies the wearisome Christological controversies of the fourth to the seventh centuries.

That experience has always been in essentials the same. It includes two elements of one whole: (*a*) the consciousness of redemption, not merely as forgiveness, but as complete deliverance into a new life—this is bound up with the death and resurrection of Christ; and (*b*) the consciousness of spiritual power—this is the realisation of the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit. It makes no difference at all that these things have in one age or another become associated with ideas which we may find it difficult to entertain. As we have

said, in its broad outlines Christian experience has been identical from age to age. This itself is a most massive and impressive fact. By its own power and weight it may incline us to believe that it rests upon the solid ground of reality. If we are led to this conclusion along this path, we shall after all be following a parallel road to that trodden by all men of science, the keystone of whose faith is the rationality (better, perhaps, than "uniformity") of the universe.

It would, however, be unhistorical and misleading to overlook the indisputable fact that the task of formulating a theology was one undertaken by the Church with great reluctance. It was forced upon her by the pressure of theories which seemed to contradict the fundamental experience of redemption, on the one hand, or the primary faith in the unity of God, on the other.

For example, Tritheism is intolerable, as intolerable to the monotheistic belief inherited from the Jewish Church as to the whole trend of modern thought. Yet the conception of three "aspects" of the divine nature was felt to do less than justice to the content of the original records or to Christian experience. Again, if Jesus Christ be, as He is experienced as being, Saviour and Redeemer, He cannot be merely a man as other men. Nor can He be a kind of demi-god, else we get a relapse at once into heathenism. Again, if He be the Redeemer of men, He must be throughly and completely human, not a composite of human and divine elements. Nor can deity and humanity

be regarded as existing side by side in separate compartments. Once more, His humanity cannot be swallowed up or transmuted by deity.

Thus, under the pressure of Tritheistic and Sabellian controversies, emerges the doctrine of the Trinity. Out of the turmoil of Arian, Apollinarian, Nestorian, and Eutychian theories, comes the Chalcedonian definition of the Incarnation.

Unwelcome as was the task of the formulation of the doctrine, it would be hard to exaggerate the extent of the Church's debt to "heresies." For they led directly not merely to a clearer statement but to a clearer understanding of the implications of her spiritual experience. Further, it would be a profound mistake to regard heresies as simply false. No heresy has ever lived except by reason of the truth which it enshrines. A heresy may be defined as an over-emphasis on one aspect of the truth, probably one neglected at the time, which, by reason of this emphasis, misses the wholeness and proportion of the truth.

We come now to a difficulty which is in many quarters acutely felt. Of necessity, the doctrines of the Church are expressed in the language and in terms of the thought of a long-past age. There is the general problem: How far does this fact disqualify them from being regarded as expressions of the absolute truth? And there are a host of particular problems, of which the use of the word "person" and "union of two natures" present most difficulty.

The first question will not detain us very long. In any case, it is quite clear that absolute truth is unattainable by man. Whatever measure of truth is discovered by, or revealed to us, and the two things are, as we have seen, but two aspects of one process, must be relative to our finite minds. This holds good in all departments of human knowledge. In respect of theology, it is even more obviously true than elsewhere. All theological statements are attempts to express the ineffable Name. Hence we fitly call them symbolic. As symbols, the highest value we claim for them is that we believe them to be less inadequate representations of the truth than any others which could be devised. This refers to their content. The mode of expression will call next for our consideration. But we may note at this point that the statements in the Creed are closely intertwined with assertions of historical happenings. The union in the Christian religion of history and doctrine, fact and value, we have already discussed. Such union is not accidental, but integral to faith in the Incarnation. But no explanation of the nature or mode of these facts is offered in the Creed. For example, the reality of the Resurrection is asserted, but no theory as to the manner of the Resurrection, or the nature of the risen body. Nevertheless, it would be entirely to misapprehend the Christian Creed if we regarded it as merely a collection of symbols. This would be to identify Christianity with a purely abstract theory, and thereby to destroy its

essential character, as rooted in the common life of man. We cannot get rid of historical implications in a faith which is founded upon what we believe to have been a revelation of God under conditions of time and space, and in a theology which claims to be interpretative of the religious experience resulting from this. Theology, in respect of its symbolic character, is, after all, in no worse position than some branches of natural science. The analogy is, I think, a fair one, although subject to the limitations which beset all analogies. For here we have to deal with the unseen, spiritual order which, by its very nature, can only be communicated to us under symbolic form. The actual symbols used were dictated by the modes of thought and by the language of the world and time which saw the formulation of Christian doctrine, the Græco-Roman world of the earlier centuries of our era. While, therefore, Christian experience has remained essentially unchanged in its broad features, it might be argued that Christian theology needs to be restated from time to time. Further, it may be said, with more than a show of reason, that our modern thought is so different from ancient thought that, while the process of reasoning must be the same, the counters which reasoning uses, the concepts it employs, have been so utterly changed, that never more than now was such a restatement needed. The force of this contention is undoubted. To adapt the language of a New Testament parable, we have the old wine

still, but the ancient bottles show signs of wear. But the difficulty is that the new bottles are not forthcoming. Further, the old ones retain so much of the fragrance of the valued vintage that we not only naturally but reasonably shrink from risking its loss. No new formulæ we can at present conceive would so nearly convey the truths which the Christian believes as the old. We have outgrown the theories, or some of them, which underlie the familiar language, but—a point needing very careful attention—any new formulation would contain far more theory than the ancient creeds. It may well be that we have discarded much of the old philosophy, but, after all, there is but little of it implied in the credal forms, whereas a modern reconstruction could not fail to be heavily charged with the philosophical ideas of our age, and how can we secure the permanence of these? The antique bottles are to our eyes of queer shape, but at least they do hold the wine safely, and they are redolent with the perfume of saintly lives all down the centuries, and hallowed to ourselves by sacred associations. No damage is done to truth by retaining them, if at the same time we leave room for the fullest and frankest criticism. Of course, with all this, we must avoid the vulgar error of thinking that our modern views are always right, or the final expression of the truth.

We now come to the consideration of some particular problems which arise from the retention

of ancient phraseology. The question really is: What is the meaning of the symbols which the Church has used in order to express what she believed about Jesus Christ?

Let us clear the ground by three preliminary observations.

(1) The language used does not go beyond the level of thought reached by St Paul, St John, and the author of Hebrews. It is the attempt to draw out the implications of their thought, as they in their turn revealed the implications of the earliest belief of Christians. In all cases the spiritual experience lies behind the theological statement.

(2) We must repeat here, that the so-called definitions of the Church are very largely negative in character. They were intended not so much to define, as to exclude other statements which were thought to lead to results inconsistent with the normal experience of the Christian, as a man who owed obedience to the heavenly Lord, who felt that his whole nature had been redeemed through His Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection, and was conscious of the moral strength which came from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Behind and formative of this experience of the individual was the social experience of the community, which believed itself to be indwelt by the Spirit outpoured by the Ascended Lord upon His Church, constituting it to be the Body of the Christ.

(3) However far we may get in "modernising" the expression of the symbol, it must still retain its symbolic character. No advance of thought can enable us to transcend the conditions of time and space, which will continue to furnish the moulds both of our ideas, and of the language by which we express them.

In effect, if we try to express them in modern terms, the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation constitute a view of the universe which will stand all the tests applicable, in a far more satisfactory way than any other which has been suggested. Demonstration, as we saw in our first chapter, cannot be attained for any world-view. But if the Christian philosophy of the world (*a*) supplies a coherent account of human experience; and (*b*) in an eminent degree is conservative of human values, then we have all the reasons we can justifiably demand for accepting it as true. Of course it must be also shown not to involve any internal contradiction. This we think can be done. Further, it may turn out that the fact that it has its roots in history, centrally in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, but also in the preceding development of the Jewish religion and in the subsequent experience of the Christian Church, may prove to be a source of strength rather than of weakness.

The universe, then, has a spiritual background. The highest faculties of man, his reason and conscience, are our best clues to the nature of Reality. Evolution is neither a matter of chance nor of necessity. It is the gradual unfolding of the

Reality which both transcends it and is immanent in it, and its unity is the reflection of a supreme unifying principle, which holds transcendence and immanence together, and is mirrored in the social life of man, above all in its highest form of mutual love.

In other words, Godhead is threefold. The One God is transcendent and immanent and the unifying principle in the natural order and in the spiritual fellowship of human beings. This threefold activity answers to like distinctions in His own Nature. The created universe exists as the veritable image of the Uncreated.

The terms in which this internal distinction is expressed are symbols, but the least inadequate symbols of a truth which necessarily transcends the highest reach of human thought. They are not terms coined by an abstract philosophy, but deeply grounded in an historical revelation and a wide spiritual experience. This is the reason why, while not merely admitting but insisting on their inadequacy, we believe them to convey not false but true ideas to the mind. But they are human terms, drawn from human experience, for how else can the knowledge of the divine be mediated to human minds? Only this very fact is a warning to be extremely careful as to how we draw any sort of inference from them. This is above all true of the words Fatherhood and Sonship. It is a finger-post pointing in the same direction that the Son is also the Word of the Father. When, on the strength of texts in St John

(especially) and St Paul, the idea of the Father sending the Son, an idea which in any case refers to an event in the time order, is so pressed as to suggest an analogy between a father sending his son to die for his country, we are in a region of sheer mythology. The Fathers and the Councils of the Church, although it is the fashion now in some quarters to decry their labours, were far more enlightened and intellectual than we sometimes give them credit for being. The "definitions" of the Church are more far-sighted than we imagine. The Nicene ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς is a permanent safeguard against the kind of "Hesiodic theogony" (a phrase I owe to Canon Lacey) into which some of our modern writers are inclined to slip. Tritheism is not an obsolete peril.

On the other hand, I do not feel safe in following here the lead of one from whom I have learnt very much, the late Dr Rashdall. The so-called "persons" are more than aspects of the Godhead. The denial of this is not so serious an error as the sacrifice of the divine unity, which we are bound to safeguard at all costs. Yet it does sacrifice something very valuable, for which we are entirely dependent on the Church doctrine of the Trinity, and that is the idea of the complexity of the divine life. A simple monad is not a true conception of the God mirrored in so complex a universe. The temporal process of differentiation has an eternal archetype in the nature of the Reality which reveals itself in that process.

Fatherhood and Sonship are the least inade-

quate symbols. The relationship is one charged with moral meaning. St Paul, in one of his great moments of intuition, seems to regard the divine fatherhood as being far more than an analogy, as in fact the archetype of all fatherhood (Eph. iii 15). The thought is worth prolonged consideration. It fits in with the general point of view from which this whole book is written. The universe, especially human life at its highest, which is, for us, the crown of the evolutionary process, reflects, imperfectly no doubt yet truly, the structure of Reality itself. The universe is the manifestation in time and space of the Eternal Son or Word. We can trace, perhaps even below man, some faint trace of its response to the love of the Father. Is it merely fancy which sees in the beauty and gladness of created things, in the songs of the birds, in the unfettered joy of life, the first beginnings of that which later is to become articulate as human praise? Much more clearly and definitely is the response made in moral life and rational worship. Then at last we see the perfect response in the complete surrender of the human heart and will, in Him Whom the Christian believes to be both Son of Man, the Head and Representative of the race, and the Eternal Son or Word of the Father become incarnate.

The unity which binds things together into a universe and to God is the manifestation of the living bond between the Father and the Son which Christian theology names the Holy Spirit, Who

is, in St Augustine's fine phrase, *ipsa caritas*, love itself.

Once more, these words, as all words we apply to Reality, are symbolic, but we contend that as symbols they are less inadequate than any others for the expression of that reality. This applies even to the word " person," which to-day, partly by reason of its changed meaning, has to be used with the greatest caution.

The chief service of the doctrine of the Trinity is that it displays Reality as containing in itself all the richness and wealth of personal life. On this point we dwelt, in the course of a general discussion of Christian theism in Chapter III, and therefore do not enlarge upon it here. But three remarks may be appended in this place.

1. We can hold firmly to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity even if we have qualms about some of the theological terms which have been used to express it. After all, the faith in the One God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, does appear in the New Testament, and " three persons in One God " does not. But we may refer to what has been already said about the language of the ancient definitions, and the unwisdom of too hastily discarding them. Meanwhile, we shall not be in danger of thinking that such words have the same claim on our rational acceptance as the doctrine itself. I do not think it is going too far to say that it is this doctrine which makes it possible to the modern man to believe in God.

2. The entire difficulty felt in accepting the doctrine, as distinct from any expression of it, is due to a radical and well-nigh incurable anthropomorphism, from which it is the chief business of the doctrine to deliver us. From all anthropomorphism it is impossible, nor is it desirable, to escape. But the particular kind to which we are now alluding is that of conceiving the Godhead, the one Supreme Reality in which we and the universe "live and move and have our being" under the form of an individual human being, a magnified man. Obviously the doctrine of the Trinity is absolutely incredible on such a supposition. It is one of its chief merits that it cannot be held in the same mind side by side with this simple but radically false conception of God.

3. The wonder is that so satisfying a philosophy of the universe did not have its birth as a philosophy at all, but in the spiritual experience of simple, common men. Of its implications they never dreamt. They had been brought into contact with Jesus Christ and had come to realise His unique relationship with the Father, and after His withdrawal had become conscious of a new spiritual energy within themselves. That a doctrine founded on such a basis should come to be seen as containing a rational philosophy of God and the universe approaches as near to a demonstration of its truth as any world-view admits of.

In order of thought, the doctrine of the Incarnation follows that of the Trinity: in the order of

historical development it precedes it. The stages are these: the association of the first disciples with Jesus of Nazareth: their experiences of His death and resurrection and of His presence with them through the Spirit after Pentecost: their resulting conviction that God had revealed Himself through this Man and through Him was working in the community and themselves, that He was the sender of the Spirit and the source of all works of healing and signs and wonders: their belief that He would shortly be manifested in glory. All these culminated in a certain belief about Him, expressed in titles such as we have considered above. Before the New Testament comes to an end, we have in St Paul, St John and Hebrews a theology of the Incarnation. In the succeeding centuries this doctrine is elaborated by the aid of the terms of contemporary philosophy. But this in turn is reflected back upon the idea of God. As we have already seen, more than traces of Trinitarian doctrine are to be found in the New Testament, and we have noticed briefly some points in its gradually developed expression. But behind both, and as origin of both, lies the experience, first of the historical Christ, then of the new life in the community inspired by the Spirit.

Consider, then, this elaborated theology of the Incarnation, as the Council of Chalcedon in 451 gave it its classical expression—two natures in one Person. These terms, again, are symbolic. No better symbols are to be found of the truth they were meant to convey. This truth, which

had been reached, perhaps we might say subconsciously held, long before even its simplest expression, was that God had revealed Himself to men in terms of human life.

There is nothing irrational in this conception. On the contrary, it seems to fit in, to-day, with the highest ideas we can frame both of God and of man.

If God is the Supreme Reality manifested in this space-time universe, it is reasonable to believe that He is manifested in ascending degrees of completeness or adequacy all up the ascending scale of existence. This manifestation we may well learn from St John to call the Word, the utterance of God. In human nature He is most completely disclosed to man. The intellectual, moral, religious lives of men in their highest, that is truest, development, are the mirrors of the Eternal Light. Is there a higher degree of self-disclosure possible? The Incarnation is the affirmative answer to this question. The Word Himself chose that human nature, already evolved to be the means of His self-expression in a higher degree than lower existences, as the organ or instrument of His personal action towards men as revealing, for men as redeeming, in men as indwelling life. The last only became possible as the result of the complete spiritualisation of His human nature by its passing through death into a higher order where, still human, it becomes invested with new qualities and exhibits the action of new laws. Among these fresh potentialities

is that of communication to other human beings as a spring of moral energy. " Except a grain of corn, having fallen into the earth, die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit."

The action of God in the world is thus represented as absolutely continuous. The Incarnation is a climax of the process which began with the first appearance of life, or rather, with the series of secular changes which made our planet a fit abode for living forms. But it is also the beginning of a new spiritual order, in the earliest stages of which we still are to-day. For twenty centuries is but a brief period in the working-out of the divine purpose.

If we take the other conception of the universe, as manifesting the life of the Son of God, our thought will follow a parallel line. For man, from the religious point of view, exhibits, or is capable of exhibiting, the divine sonship in a conscious moral way. The inherent sonship of the universe becomes articulate in him alone, as far as our imperfect knowledge goes. Thus, once more, there is nothing irrational in the belief that the divine principle of the whole, that eternal sonship which is the current of the universal life flowing beneath all its manifestations, should, at this one particular point, come to the surface, and be realised in an historical human life.

All through, we are deeply conscious of how the doctrine of the Incarnation sets its seal on the profound scientific conceptions—" all nature is one ": " man is organic to nature."

It represents no alien irruption from without, but is the making clear of what the universe, as regards that portion of it, at least, with which we are familiar, has been trying to utter from the first. We get a glimpse, necessarily only a glimpse, of some transcendent principle of evolution, as the background of the organic evolution about which we are beginning to learn.

This is the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation. What it is opposed to is (*a*) a vague doctrine of divine immanence which has its logical conclusion in the abolition of all moral and intellectual distinctions — right and wrong, true and false, being equally manifestations of the divine: (*b*) a reduced Christology, according to which Christ was a man in whom the Logos dwelt in fuller measure than in other men.

The problem which now confronts us is this: assuming the doctrine of the Incarnation to be true, How, in the light of it, can we interpret the historical Christ as presented to us in the Gospels?

There is no doubt of the true humanity of our Lord. He was not merely human in some vague, generic sense, but a man of His age and His country. He thought and He spoke as a Jew of the first century. True, there was in Him that which transcended all local and national limitations, and an unrivalled authority which impresses us to-day, even as it impressed His first hearers. But His message could never have been delivered at all, or if delivered it would not

have been intelligible and therefore could not have been handed down, unless He had acted and spoken under these limitations. Our present point is that they were real to Himself. Attempts to analyse "the consciousness of Jesus" must necessarily be futile. That He was conscious of communion with the Father, and of a supreme mission from Him, cannot be doubted. But equally little can we doubt that His mind was conditioned by the whole Jewish environment of that particular period. The Eternal Word, if He was to manifest Himself in a genuine Incarnation, could do so, as far as we can see, in no other way. If God was to enter into human history, He must enter it at a particular time and in a particular place, with all that this implies. This is the truth underlying the "kenotic theories." But I am sure that we cannot assume that the activities of the Word, or Son, were wholly confined to His manifestations of Himself as Jesus of Nazareth. Here we are handicapped by the hopeless inadequacy of human thought. But we can best picture the Incarnate Life, that deliberate limitation of Himself, with its spatial and temporal conditions, as one act amid His infinite activity, though to us an act of transcendent significance. This, I believe, enables us to do away with the old insoluble problem of the "double consciousness." The other ancient riddle: Was the humanity assumed by the Word personal or impersonal? may admit of solution along similar lines. If, at this point in His

fathomless being He willed to feel, think, act, speak as a man, why should we trouble ourselves about " human personality," which is, after all, a philosophical conception, a creation (however valuable) of the human intellect, somewhat vague and certainly the result of abstraction like all our other conceptions? We have (*a*) the historical and proved truth of His genuine manhood: (*b*) the Christian faith that in and through that manhood God was revealing Himself to men because only so could He make Himself entirely intelligible to them, and that the motive for His doing so was the divine love, stooping, as love must, to the level of those He desired to help, and entering into, not the limitations merely, but the real suffering and sorrow of our common human lot. I submit that it is an intellectual error to introduce here our ideas of what is or may be inferred from our own abstractions of " nature " and " personality." The Infinite Word immanent in and sustaining the universe, revealed in the age-long evolution of life—then, a culminating act of revelation, in a finite human life within His activity in space and time, which whole activity is itself a " moment " in that timeless existence in which He is within the divine unity: these are indeed high and difficult thoughts, but they are not irrational nor self-contradictory. One great advantage of this line of thought is that it enables us to insist on the genuine humanity which is revealed in the Gospels as strongly as on any " humanitarian " view, as not merely consistent

with but involved by the real Incarnation of the Word. Further, if the divine principle of sonship was revealed under truly human, *i.e.* limited and progressive conditions, then we must realise the necessity of a real moral development. So we begin to understand the profound truth of the saying in Hebrews: "Son although He was, yet He learnt obedience from the things which He suffered."

If we hold on to the truth of the Incarnation, we shall, I think, be ready to use the formula of "one Person in two natures," and perhaps not merely to use, but to be grateful for it, as probably the best symbol which could be devised. Only, I would repeat, we must ever remember that it is a symbol, and therefore not itself to be used as the ground for an elaborate scheme of inferences from the use of the words "nature" and "person." Once more, I repeat, these are but abstract conceptions of our own devising. They are valuable, as hinting at truths, but to attach supreme importance to them is a kind of intellectual idolatry, a bowing down to the creations of our own minds. That this view is sound would seem to be proved by the fact that, if we do attempt to press them with rigorous logic, we sooner or later find ourselves in an *impasse*. Do we not sometimes think of God as if He were an abstraction, and not the most concrete of all Beings, Himself the living ground of all existence?

I add one or two notes, as corollaries of this view.

(1) There is no contradiction at all in holding that Jesus of Nazareth was the Eternal Word made flesh, and that His mental outlook was that of the time in which He appeared. No Christian doubts that His physical organism was truly human; surely then His mind, conditioned by that organism, was equally human. Here was a particular finite expression of the universal life of the Logos. In other words, the Logos was Incarnate in reality and not in appearance. The Docetic heresy is not dead yet, only now applied to our Lord's mind and not as of old to His body.

(2) The great difficulty in believing, and this applies both to the Trinity and the Incarnation, lies in the fact that our intellect is so deeply infected with the ideas of space. This is one of the illuminating thoughts of the Bergsonian philosophy. Perforce we think of the spiritual world in terms of space, where they do not apply at all. So we imagine God as divided into three, the Incarnate Logos as divided into two. There is no remedy for this, as we cannot escape from our own minds, shaped and moulded by a spatial universe. This also applies to Dean Inge's strictures on the " three-storey world " of popular Christianity. I think that it is an even greater difficulty, that this same feature of our mental structure leads us to conceive of God as an individual, bounded by lines drawn in the vastness of an imaginary space. This makes the doctrine

of the Trinity so hard to believe. We can only remind ourselves that the whole set of difficulties is not due to reason at all, but to false mental pictures which yet we cannot help drawing.

(3) We have spoken of the limitations of our Lord. It would be wrong to say "of His humanity," for that adds no additional idea. Human nature is by definition finite. At the resurrection we believe that the humanity of the Word entered upon a new phase of being, in which all limitations except those necessarily involved in its continuing to be human (and we have no knowledge of or means of knowing what these are) were removed. I think that we may perhaps picture this as a new quality or attribute now possessed by the Eternal Word, whereby He is really brought into closer relation even than before with the entire race of mankind. All ideas of the Church and the Sacraments may be brought in here, such as that of the Church as the Body of Christ, of the Sacraments as conveying through the Spirit His divine human life to the believer.

(4) The true thought that our Lord was in some sense the representative Man, a conception already adumbrated in St Paul's ὁ ἔσχατος Ἀδάμ, has suggested the idea that His humanity was "impersonal," whatever this may mean. We have already alluded to this. A better foundation for this conception is to be found in the

universal relation which the Logos holds to all creation, including mankind. He Who came to enlighten, redeem, and sanctify men, was no alien visitor to a world hitherto strange to Him. He was that universal Light which "lighteneth every man coming into the world."

We have now, after many wanderings, returned to the point from which we began. We saw, in our first chapter, that the Christian philosophy of the universe, based on the doctrine of the Logos, was a wholly intelligible and coherent scheme of thought. It explains, as nothing else does, the central mystery of the rationality of the universe, or, in other words, the kinship between the universe and the human mind. Thus it is admirably fitted to become the permanent metaphysic of natural science.

But this philosophy was not born, like so many other philosophies, of *a priori* ideas. Ancient as the underlying thought is, in its developed Christian form, it is based on a great spiritual experience. It is, in fact, the outcome of an historical religion.

Thus it became necessary for us to examine the rational foundations of religion in general, and of the Christian religion more especially. This we tried to do, in the earlier portion of this book, in the light of the penetrating criticism of Mr J. Huxley, whom we have dared in our turn to criticise when we found him straying from his own field of biology into those of philosophy and theology.

The result has been fourfold.

(1) We have seen that religion represents a genuine experience of mankind, therefore necessarily the experience of a fact of universal import to the race.

(2) All theologies are attempts to express the nature of this fact in forms of human thought and by means of human language. We are prepared to recognise some measure of truth in all of them.

(3) A comparison, of necessity brief but for our purpose sufficient, has shown the superior claim of the Christian theology as a less inadequate account than the others of the nature of the Reality which underlies the whole of human experience, including man's religious experience. For it is that theology which, in a far higher degree than the rival theologies, preserves, emphasises, and traces to their final source in the Eternal Life of God, the supreme human values of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.

(4) In the later chapters we have tried to give a more particular account of the genesis and immediate antecedents of this Christian theology, and thus to exhibit its claim to our intellectual adhesion as a system which is in itself rational and coherent, but whose supreme claim lies in its appeal to the moral and spiritual sense.

No "world-view," as we have more than once pointed out, can admit of demonstration. But here we have a philosophy more intellectually satisfying than any other, while it is more than a mere philosophy, because it rests upon a profound spiritual experience, the crown and explication of the entire spiritual experience of mankind. This experience is the communion of disciples with the Incarnate Word in the days of His earthly sojournings with men, and thereafter with the same Christ exalted and by His Spirit indwelling the Church His Body.

"In the beginning was the Word,
All things came into being through Him.
That which has come into being in Him was life,
The life was the light of men.
The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
And we beheld His glory, glory as of an only begotten Son from the Father."

"That which we have seen and heard we announce also unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ; and these things we write that our joy may be fulfilled."

The universe is still mysterious. All difficulties can never be removed. Still "we see by a mirror obscurely." But of all accounts the Christian faith appears as the most satisfying, alike to the restless search of the intellect and to the aspiration of the moral nature. We have

sought, however imperfectly, to show that it is no blind acceptance of authority, no clinging to an outworn creed, but a supremely rational choice to follow, with mind and will, this "light which shines in a dark place."

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